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INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

ISSUE 40

FEBRUARY 1996

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INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

Super Play

FEBRUARY ISSUE 40

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Next issue on sale: Thursday, 1st February 1996

Super Play comes from the same office as *Sega Power*, *Ultimate Future Games*, *GamesMaster*, *The Official PlayStation Magazine*, *Edge* and *Total!*, and we're friends with *Amiga Power*, *CD-ROM Today*, *Amiga Format*, *PC Format*, *ST Format*, *PC Gamer*, *.net*, *Arcane* and *SFX* too.

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Future PUBLISHING

THE SUPER PLAY EDITORIAL

from the BIG CHAIR

Our full contents listing starts just over the page

Life begins at 40, so they say, and for us the big four-oh has certainly seen a new lease of life in the *Super Play* office (as well as not a small amount of smugness directed towards our *Sega Power* chums across the way). After months of rumours, false starts and a lot of treading water Nintendo have finally gone public with the most powerful home gaming system yet – the Ultra 64.

But not content with just letting the Japanese public (and plane-loads of grubby Western journalists) get their hands on its three-pronged, button-laden joypad, they also gave us a taste of some of the astonishing games we would eventually be playing. Of course *Super Play* was there too so we have no regrets in turning over a massive 12 pages to what is definitely going to be *the* gaming event of 1996.

Not that we've forgotten our beloved SNES, mind you. Those awfully decent chaps at Rare have been tinkering away with their Silicon Graphics workstations again and squeezing the results into a SNES to produce the follow-up to one of the biggest selling games of all time – *Donkey Kong Country*. But whether or not there's gameplay to match *Diddy Kong*'s beautifully rendered coat can only be discovered by perusing our top review on page 36. Remember, unlike other magazines, *Super Play* reviewers aren't allowed the use of rose-titned spectacles in their quest for gaming truth.

Looking to the future, 1996 still looks rosy for the little grey box. Nintendo have pledged their continuing support to the SNES, and by the time you read this, the utterly superb *Yoshi's Island* should be gracing UK shelves, while on the international front there's the incredible-looking *Super Mario RPG* and such treats as a massive 32Mbit *Kirby* SNES compliation in the works for later in the year.

And if you've only just started out in the world of Nintendo this Christmas you have the best back catalogue of games in the world awaiting you. (Which leads us into a plug for our What Cart special, which starts on p52.)

Happy drooling...

Alison Harper
Editor

INDEPENDENT SNES AND NINTENDO ULTRA 64 MAGAZINE

SUPER PLAY

CON

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SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

DOOM
FINAL PART

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FEBRUARY 1996 ISSUE 40

ABC: 23,657*

*We're the biggest-selling independent Nintendo mag, but we don't like to talk about it... Often.

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ARCADE CLASSICS ● p50

WHAT CART SPECIAL

page 52

Your indispensable buyer's guide – hundreds of SNES games reviewed and rated by the *Super Play* team. Spend that Christmas dosh.

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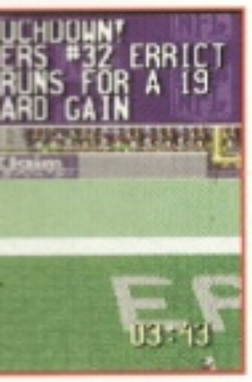


CIAL

The future is here! Well, it's got as far as Japan. The most in-depth probing of the Ultra 64 begins just over the page!

Mario prepares to enter the *true* next generation of gaming.

POW

ULTRA 64

page 6

5

RARE TALENT

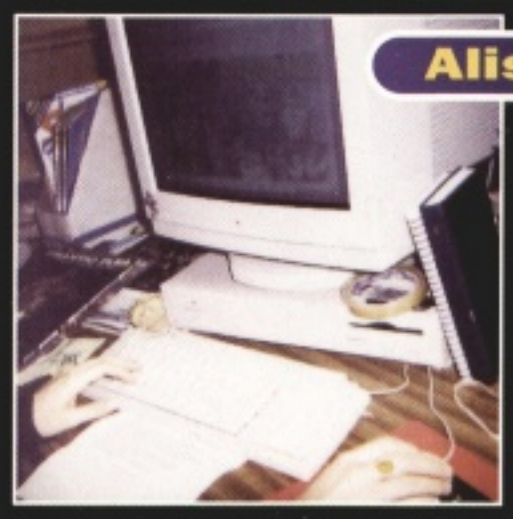
page 30

The development team that brought *Killer Instinct* and *Donkey Kong Country* to the SNES spill their guts to *Super Play* in this exclusive interview. Also revealed: Rare's history, from 8-bit computer game pioneers in the '80s to their partnership with Nintendo today...

SUPER

The present-opening is over, all the little chocolate bells have vanished from the tree and the turkey is down to sandwiches (though surprisingly enough there are still two full tubs of cheesy footballs in the larder). Yes, the festive season is over and it's only a matter of time before the new series of *Grange Hill* starts. Time to dig deep into your inner psyche, then, and extract that new year's resolution that you'll promise to keep faithful to all year long. Yeah, right...

PROFILES



Alison Harper

"Apart from trying to curb my insatiable desire for ginger nuts, my new year's resolution is to stop using work time to surf the Net in search of useless information that I can sell articles about to *The .net Directory*. (Even though I make a huge wad of cash doing so each month.)"

Ollie Alderton

"I vow to watch as many sub-standard '50s B-movies as possible. Especially ones that contain obvious stock footage whenever the American military are called in to deal with a monster/alien/atomically-enhanced animal that's operated by visible wires."

Tony Mott

"My resolution is to give up beer, tabs and late nights. Apart from being unhealthy pursuits, generally speaking, partaking of such delights leaves me so strapped of cash each month that I can hardly afford my steady diet of burgers, pizzas and fried chicken. Er, hold on..."

Wil Overton

"I will not abuse *Super Play*'s petty cash tin by getting our Japanese correspondent to buy expensive RPGs and music CDs that the magazine has no use for after one issue and that I can smuggle into the depths of my bag, never again to be seen in the office. Then again..."

THE BEAST COMETH

Just as promised, Nintendo unveiled the successor to the Super Nintendo at the Shoshinkai Software Exhibition '95 on November 24. In a hail of publicity – the event enjoyed CNN coverage in the States – the Ultra 64 finally turned from the stuff of dreams to something to touch, and the reception it received was that of general mass excitement, with just a touch of disappointment thrown in by some for good measure.

The downer came in the form of only two pieces of playable software on display – a 50% version of *Super Mario 64* and a 20%-complete *Kirby Bowl 64* (see full previews elsewhere). Nintendo had, of course, promised to have ten games ready to test, but three days prior to the exhibition made the decision to display the remaining games in the line-up on videotape only. The reason? It's difficult to say for definite. One theory suggests that Nintendo were eager for their new *Mario* title to get all the attention; if it was jostling with lots of other titles there was a danger it might not make the impact they were hoping for. Also worth bearing in mind is that if all the games had been available to play, some would have been running in a distinctly unfinished state, lacking soundtracks and finer presentation details and suchlike, and Nintendo did not want to risk show reports appearing based on the strength of beta versions such as this. Lastly there's the psychological factor of showing their entire hand: after playing ten of the system's games now, wouldn't everyone demand to see *another* ten when the machine gets its next public airing? Probably.

Another oddity concerning the unveiled games was the conspicuous lack of home versions of *Killer Instinct* and *Cruis'n USA*. There had been rumours that Rare's coin-op update had been canned because it was proving too weighty to be scrunched down to the Nintendo-imposed launch line-up cart limit of 64 megabits. Rare's Production Manager Simon Farmer, however, is quick to quash such talk: "*Killer Instinct* will certainly be making an appearance on the Ultra and we'll show it when we think the timing is right. The game wasn't released as a consumer title in Japan so to show it at Shoshinkai wasn't considered appropriate timing." *Cruis'n USA* is certainly still happening, and failed to appear because of its obvious all-American origins. By not showing games which could be judged squarely against benchmark

Although Ninty promised 100 Ultra 64s to win at Shoshinkai, not one attendee left with a machine...

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form of only two pieces lay – a 50% version of complete *Kirby Bowl 64*). Nintendo had, of n games ready to test, xhibition made the ining games in the line- ason? It's difficult to say gests that Nintendo were le to get all the attention; other titles there was a e impact they were ng in mind is that if all e to play, some would nctly unfinished state, r presentation details did not want to risk ed on the strength of Lastly there's the ing their entire hand: m's games now, o see *another* ten when blic airing? Probably. ng the unveiled games home versions of *Killer* ere had been rumours ad been canned because o be scrunched down to h line-up cart limit of 64 Manager Simon Farmer, uch talk: "*Killer Instinct* ppearance on the Ultra ink the timing is right. s a consumer title in hinkai wasn't considered *USA* is certainly still ear because of its . By not showing games rely against benchmark

0 Ultra 64s to win at e left with a machine...

Ooh, look at the curves on that. Makes you want to take it home for the evening, no?

titles of other platforms, Nintendo also cleverly shielded their machine from potentially unfavourable comparisons with the likes of Saturn *Sega Rally* and PlayStation *Ridge Racer*.

So what was the buzz like around the machine? One developer had this to say: "We've been working with 3D for around five years now and the Ultra 64 represents a completely new era". Others, however, were not quite so optimistic: "It's not really doing much that we haven't seen on the PlayStation – take away its mipmap interpolation and there's not much left to get excited about..."

This feeling was reflected elsewhere, with numerous industry-watchers claiming that the finished unit could not, in fact, throw around a noticeably larger amount of polygons than that of its main market rival, the PlayStation.

But processing funk should never be an issue when comparing a Nintendo machine to any other, because the big N's effort has access to that most valuable of videogaming commodities: gameplay – a vast amount of which is currently bottled up, just waiting to be siphoned into millions of their carts as they begin their next assault on global domination.

The bottom line? Nintendo is the most talented videogame company in the world; it appears to have created the greatest ever videogames machine to go in it.

Now turn over for a massive 11 pages of news and previews...

SHOSHINKAI, JAPAN — NINTENDO 64 UNVEI

SEVEN FLAVOURS OF PAD

The Ultra 64's joypad is a whopping piece of kit in itself: at least twice the size of a standard SNES 'pad and packed with more features than a NASA control deck (almost).

Apart from its most obvious technical innovation (more of which in a mo), the finished joypad surprised all who saw it by being available in no less than seven colour schemes: grey (the standard version you'll get with the machine), black, dark blue, light blue, red, green and yellow. Yep, multi-player gaming is high on Nintendo's agenda, with the obvious advantage of such a variety of colours coming from sitting down for a frenzied multi-player sesh with three friends and knowing at a glance which controller's yours.

On the pad's front you get two standard control buttons (marked, in traditional Nintendo fashion, A and B), along with four yellow ones arranged in a diamond configuration. Each of these is marked with a direction, with Nintendo indicating their primary uses as switching between various viewpoints during play – although they're definable to perform any game function, naturally. The 'trigger' on the underside of the 'pad – which will only realistically be of use in games controlled via the analogue stick – is now marked as 'Z', and is square in appearance. Finally, there's a pair of SNES-style shoulder L and R buttons set along the 'pad's top – this little beggar has everything but the kitchen sink.

The central stick is a sprung, self-centring device which is much sturdier than it looks. If you've tinkered with Philips' original CD-i joypad you'll be familiar with its style – Ninty's version offers a similar amount of throw but is much more robust.

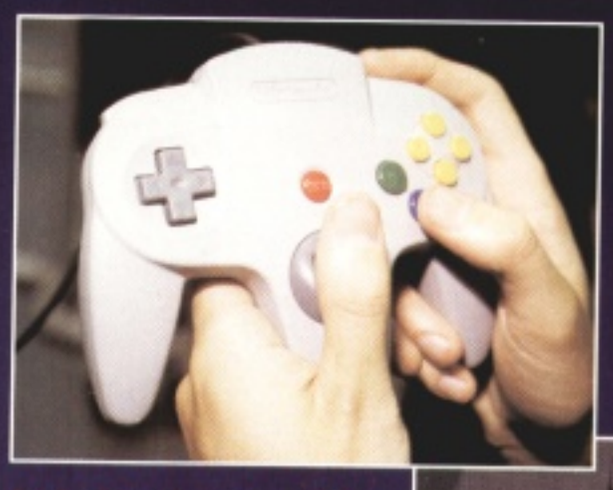
And let's not forget the 'pad's memory card facility: the slot on its underside takes itty-bitty little mini-cartridges which will be most commonly used for saving game positions and game option settings. Nintendo have also claimed that they can be programmed with an individual's gameplay style, allowing the 'pad to 'learn' the playing nuances of a human opponent and replicate it later in that person's absence. (Though we're a bit sceptical over this last claim, frankly.)

What all these features add up to, of course, is an expensive little device and also a unique one – you certainly won't see third parties creating their own versions of it and selling them for less than the real thing, as is increasingly the case with formats such as the PlayStation. How much can you expect to pay for your second, third and fourth pads? Nintendo have yet to confirm, but we're betting on something like £35-40.

Although the console itself does not appear to have any facility built-in for linking up machines for multi-player matches, it may be possible to network two or more Ultra 64s through its joypad sockets.

Nintendo have, incidentally, made it clear that the joypad sockets could be put to use with many different types of controller types, but haven't said what they might be. Now, a virtual reality headset, that *would* be interesting...

So what's going to be your favourite colour? We're quite taken with the light blue variation, but we won't be happy 'til we have a full set, of course.

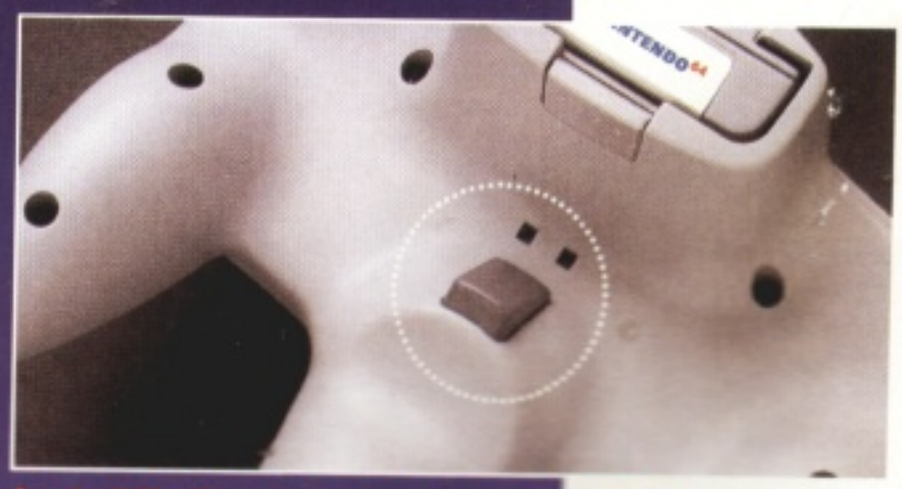


Look at the size of this baby! A veritable porker of a pad.

This is where to stick your save-game cards – in the back. Lovely.

So what happens when someone produces an Ultra 64 multitap? Simultaneous eight player gaming! (Maybe.)

The US version of the Ultra 64's 'pad currently looks like this. Note the subtle difference on the joystick...



See that? That'll be the joypad's Z button – used as a trigger-type device in conjunction with the joystick.

64 UNVEILED! — RELEASE DATE: 21ST APRIL 1996 — SHOSH KA

colour? We're
on, but we
, of course.

Nintendo 64 GAMES

- Super Mario 64 – Nintendo
- Super Mario Kart – Nintendo
- Kirby Bowl 64 – Nintendo
- Wave Race 64 – Nintendo
- The Legend of Zelda – Nintendo (Bulky Drive game)
- Killer Instinct 2 – Nintendo/Rare
- Blastdozer – Nintendo/Rare
- Goldeneye 007 – Nintendo/Rare
- Ken Griffey Jr. Baseball – Nintendo/Rare
- Cruis'n USA – Nintendo/Williams Entertainment
- Body Harvest – Nintendo/DMA Design
- Pilotwings 64 – Nintendo/Paradigm Simulations
- Creator – Nintendo/Software Creations
- Buggie-Boogie – Nintendo/Angel Studios
- Starfox 64 – Nintendo/Argonaut Software
- Turok: Dinosaur Hunter – Acclaim
- Ultra Doom – Williams Entertainment
- GTE Interactive Media's game
- Top Gun: A New Adventure – Spectrum Holobyte
- Mortal Kombat 3 by Williams Entertainment
- Red Baron – Sierra Online
- Robotech Academy – Gametek
- Monster Dunk – Mindscape
- Shadows of the Empire – LucasArts Entertainment
- FIFA Soccer '97 – EA Sports
- Wayne Gretzky 3D Hockey – Time Warner Interactive
- Final Fantasy VII – Squaresoft (Bulky Drive game)
- Frank Thomas Big Hurt Baseball – Acclaim
- Ace Driver – Namco
- Mission: Impossible – Ocean
- SoulStorm – Virtual Hollywood
- Alien Trilogy – Acclaim
- Quake – Id Software
- Stacker – Virgin Interactive
- Prey – Apogee/3D Realms
- Dragon Quest VII – Enix (Bulky Drive game)

SPECS

These are the final Ultra 64 specs direct from Nintendo's labs:

CPU

MIPS 64-bit RISC-based (customised R4000 series)
Clock speed: 93.75Mhz

MEMORY

Rambus DRAM 36Mbit
Maximum transfer speed: 4,500 Mbit/second

CO-PROCESSOR

RPC incorporating SP (sound and graphics processor) and DP (pixel drawing processor)
Clock speed: 62.5Mhz

DISPLAY

Minimum: 256 x 224 pixels; maximum: 640 x 480 pixels
Flicker-free interlace mode

COLOUR

32-bit RGBA pixel colour frame buffer support
21-bit colour video output

GRAPHICS PROCESSING FUNCTIONS

Z buffering
Anti-aliasing
Realistic texture-mapping featuring:
Tri-linear filtered mipmap interpolation
Perspective correction
Environment mapping

DIMENSIONS

Width 260mm (10.23") x Depth 190mm (7.48") x Height 73mm (2.87")

WEIGHT

1.1kg (2.42lb)

SUPER PLAY SHOSHINKAI AWARDS

Best graphics
SUPER MARIO 64

Best-looking Brit game
BLASTDOZER

Best gameplay
SUPER MARIO 64*
*Hey, there were only two to choose from

Dullest-looking game
BUGGIE BOOGIE

Best use of the N64's power
SUPER MARIO 64

Oddest-looking game
CREATOR

Turn over for top Ultra 64 facts and the big N's speech...

SHOSHINKAI, JAPAN — NINTENDO 64 UNE

Nintendo 64 FACTS

- At the time of writing, there is still no firm date in place for the Ultra 64's UK and European launch. THE's Managing Director Alan Taylor is confident that it'll reach us as soon as April next year (at around £200), but a delivery in September seems more likely.

- Cart sizes can effectively range from 64 megabits (eight megabytes) up to 256 megabits (32 megabytes) in size, although 64 and 96 megabits (12 megabytes) will be the most common cart sizes when the system launches.

- Now that the hardware has been shown, Nintendo have met with a number of Japanese third-party developers to talk about signing for the system. Konami and Capcom have still to be officially confirmed, but they make up a number of big-name PlayStation and Saturn licensees believed to be wandering back over to Nintendo territory.

- The Bulky Drive will make its debut one year on from that of the Ultra 64 at Shoshinkai '96 next November. The new *Zelda*, *Final Fantasy* and *Dragon Quest* instalments will accompany it. Yahoo!

This time next year, these *Dragon Quest VI* girls could be promoting the Nintendo 64 version of *Dragon Quest VII*!

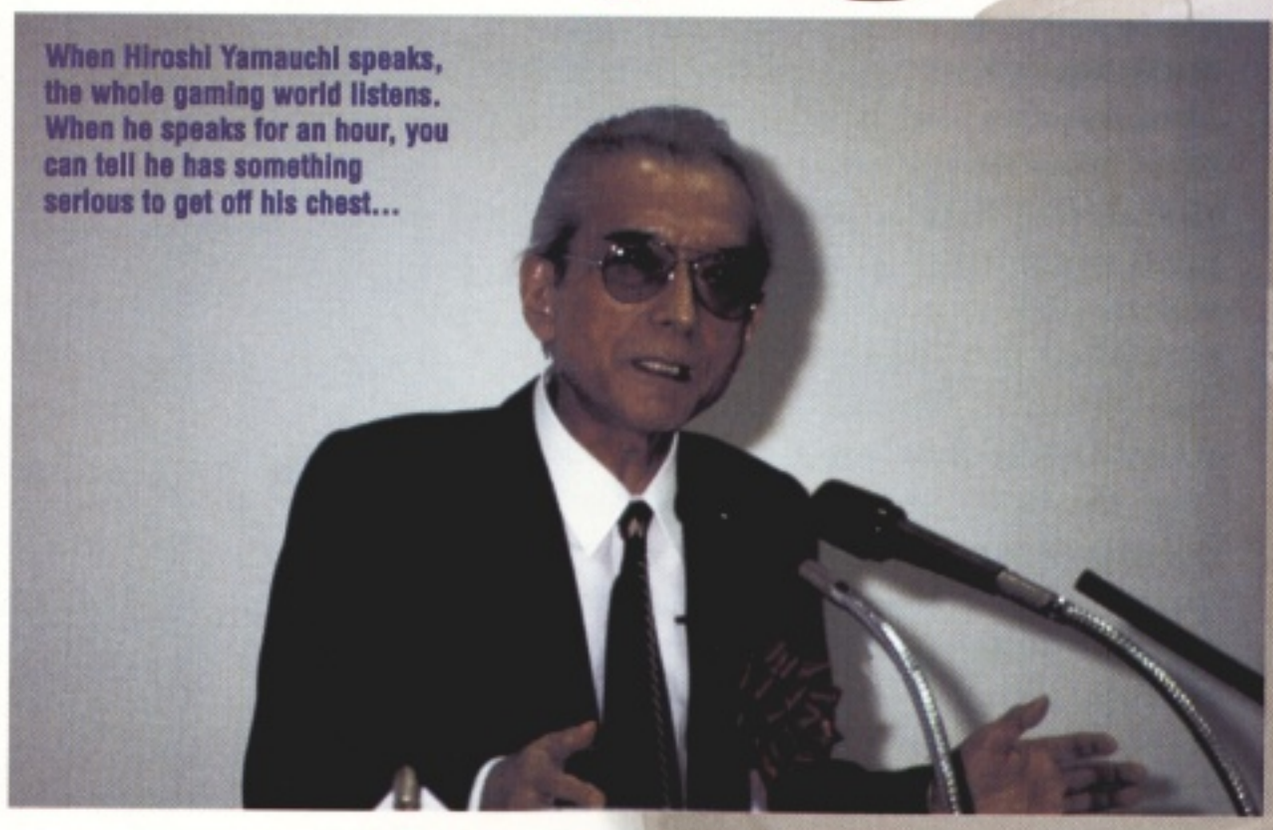
- The core audience for the machine will be the same as that of the SNES – 8-15 year olds. So, although there will be a wide wange of software types for the machine in the long term, it looks like wholesome family entertainment will make up Nintendo's own games. (Just wait for *Ultra Doom*, though, heh heh...)

- Williams will release a coin-op in 1996 using a modified version of the Ultra 64 technology. Nintendo also look set to take the system into the arcades, possibly with a *Killer Instinct* 'special edition'.

- Nintendo have claimed that members of the so-called Dream Team have agreed not to release their N64 titles on any other format within 12 months of their release. Those outside of this circle appear to have no such restraints – EA spring to mind, with their planned version of *FIFA* for the machine. It's not yet clear where exactly the benefits of Dream Team membership lie...

The Presidential Campaign

When Hiroshi Yamauchi speaks, the whole gaming world listens. When he speaks for an hour, you can tell he has something serious to get off his chest...



At 3pm on November 24, 1995, Nintendo President Hiroshi Yamauchi took to the main podium at the Shoshinkai Software Exhibition '95 and looked out across over an acre of floorspace packed with eager showgoers. His proceeding speech lasted an hour and was perhaps the most important public address Nintendo have ever made. Here are the edited highlights, along with *Super Play*'s analysis of his spiel:

He sez: "Despite the lack of unique titles, we still thought it (Virtual Boy) could be sold. I want to return to the starting point and find titles that emphasize the difference that Virtual Boy games can provide. I want to start afresh in 1996."

We sez: It's obviously interesting to hear Nintendo say they want to wipe the slate clean and start afresh. Such an admission is atypical of the company, whose pride has undoubtedly taken a bashing after the relative failure of the Virtual Boy.

He may look dwarfed by the stage here, but this is the most powerful bloke in videogaming.

He sez: "But I'm here to talk about the market and the Nintendo 64, not the Virtual Boy."

We sez: Phew.

He sez: "I might be bragging, but when this game is complete, it may be the best video game in history. The launch of *Super Mario 64* with the Nintendo 64 will occur next April 21st."

We sez: Yes, that's bragging in our book, and it's something else that's a bit out of character for Nintendo. Yamauchi is being bolshy – perhaps this is something that's aimed at Sega and Sony, both of whose attitudes are traditionally more aggressive. Maybe we're about to see a new Nintendo emerging...

He sez: "Clearly, when users who have been playing with Super Famicom *Mario Kart* can tell exactly how different the (Nintendo) 64 title is, then the players would know for themselves what the features and characteristics of the Nintendo 64 are. And they will know just how different the Nintendo 64 is from other video game systems."

We sez: Yamauchi's picked up on *Mario Kart* because it's the biggest-selling SNES game ever (although *Super Mario World* is in more SNES owners' homes, it doesn't count because a great many copies were supplied packed-in with machines), and he knows how eager everyone is to see just how far the N64 can push the theme. *Mario Kart 64* is a trump-card game, and Nintendo know it'll be one title in particular that will expose the gulf in power which exists between the N64 and 32-bit consoles (er, despite it looking a bit weak right now, at its 20%-complete stage).

He sez: "Users will just reject repetitious titles. They are sophisticated. They aren't fooled by copycat titles."

We sez: Ooh, a direct reference to the slew of driving games and polygon beat-'em-ups which have been quick to follow the likes of *Ridge Racer* and *Virtua Fighter*. It's a bloody good point, too – after you've played the bona fide article (say, *Tekken*), unimaginative copies are simply the pits. Most importantly, Nintendo will actively prevent their third-party licensees from producing games which set out to copy those that already exist on other platforms.

He sez: "The market should be led by software. But when you're talking about the next generation machine, you're talking about

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hardware. Users want software – creative, innovative software that offers a fun experience they have never witnessed before. This is a market that is led by software, so it doesn't make sense to talk about the so-called next generation machine."

We sez: Nintendo are hacked off by the next generation console war being fought over which machine can generate the most polygons per second rather than which has the best software. Does this mean they have doubts over the power of the N64's power now that it's finally passed through its vapourware period and has to fight it out against the PlayStation and Saturn in the oh-so-harsh light of day? Or perhaps Ninty really *don't* give a toss about how fast CPUs can process data, concentrating instead on the *craft* of game making? It's up to you.

He sez: "Why did we launch the Nintendo 64? To defend and protect the video game market? For Nintendo to become the sole, absolute, hegemony in the market? No. We are launching the Nintendo 64 to rescue and to save the market that is being threatened. Our objective is not to dominate the market. Rather we want to change the market so that users won't leave us. We want to assure our future."

We sez: This is interesting. Yamauchi has looked at what's happening to the videogame industry and decided that if certain parts continue the way they're going, they're going to stumble, falter and maybe even collapse completely. Bad games are bad news, and the sad fact is that there were probably just as many crappy platformers released in this last year as there were the year previous. Manufacturers working in other industries appear able to learn more from mistakes that are made, so why the difference? Nintendo are perhaps no better than the rest in some respects (*how* many tens of millions of dollars did they ploughed into marketing the Virtual Boy, exactly?), but they're openly recognising a deficiency and taking upon themselves to do something about it. Hoorah for them.

He sez: "The uniqueness of the Nintendo 64 controller enables new seeds or ideas to grow with developers. For example, the 3D Stick can be used in sports games such as soccer and baseball for more realistic control. A qualitative difference can be felt by the users. Without those changes, there may not be a future for video games."

We sez: Hmm. That last sentence can be read two ways: a) "Blimey, listen, we're serious about this Videogames In Decline problem"; and (more importantly) b) "To take part in the future of videogaming you'll have to buy our system, because you cannot experience the future of gameplay with our competition's formats". It doesn't really matter whether it's a genuine and heartfelt plea or a blatant marketing statement; the controller's contribution to the Nintendo 64 dream should be in no way underestimated. Nintendo's rivals have failed to note its significance, and that may be to their cost.

He sez: "Many of you feel that CD-ROM is the call of the day. But look at the latest buzz word in the computer world – plug-and-play – which is nothing but Famicom culture. In addition, customers thought that having no loading time is a great advantage, but more importantly, by using ROM-based games, other chips can later be incorporated into the cartridge, which allows Nintendo to offer new game opportunities to game developers. The N64 will carry on this tradition of using mask ROMs and computer chips to provide the most advanced games."

Nintendo Vice President Howard Lincoln manages a smirk at Shoshinkai. And who can blame him?

We sez: Now that Nintendo's killer system – power, controller, games and all – has finally come to light, Yamauchi obviously wants to assure the world that his company hasn't blundered in clinging so tightly to cartridges while everyone else (including even Atari, of course) has invited CD-ROM back to their place for a night cap. Claiming that DSPs (digital signal processors – like the Super FX chip) form an important part of their pro-cart stance sounds more than a little bit odd, though. After the years of planning and design work that went into the development of the Nintendo 64, wouldn't you feel just the slightest bit dischuffed with the prospect of buying an N64 game which could only run with power-boosting (and potentially expensive) supplementary chip(s)? After all, isn't the N64 supposed to be right on the cutting edge? And what happens to the DSP situation when the Bulky Drive format comes along? Games delivered on that format – which, let's face it, should be the most impressive games on the N64 – simply cannot benefit from DSPs… Nope, we're not convinced there'll be any carts which utilise what Ninty are calling mask ROMs.

Press day at Shoshinkai, when the atmosphere was quiet in comparison to when the screaming hordes arrived on following days. To their dismay, few attendees managed to get more than a few minutes with *Mario*.

He sez: "In addition to mask ROMs, Nintendo intends to provide a large capacity, high-speed peripheral that not only reads data, but it writes in, as well. At next year's exposition, this new media should be introduced in video games, and hopefully, visitors can play with and see what this new media can provide."

We sez: Okay, so Nintendo are saying you'll have to make do with carts for a year, then you'll be able to get your paws on some juicier storage capacity – the so-called Bulky Drive. Now we start entering some really interesting territory… Perhaps there's an underlying reason why Nintendo are reluctant to place, say, 400 Megabits of game capacity on their designers laps and say, "'Ere, fill this one up, will yers?" Indeed, wasn't Nintendo's last big game *Yoshi's Island* – yes, the game that reputedly took Shigeru Miyamoto and his team four years to create? That's *four years* for a 16 megabit cartridge. Does this mean we'll have to wait until the year 2000 and beyond before the N64's potential is realised? And don't laugh – developing for Ninty's new machine is a whole different ball game…

Turn the page for Shigeru Miyamoto on Super Mario 64!

SHOSHINKAI, JAPAN — NINTENDO 64 UNE

SUPER MARIO 64

When Nintendo create a new videogame system you can be sure that the first game to appear on it will feature the beaming face of a certain Italian-American plumber. With the NES it was the legendary *Super Mario Bros.*, the SNES had *Super Mario World*, *Super Mario Land* appeared on the Game Boy, while the Virtual Boy played host to the short-lived delights of *Mario's Tennis* earlier this year. There are absolutely no marks available, therefore, for guessing that the first Ultra 64 game will be a Mario starrer – *Super Mario 64*.

Project director Shigeru Miyamoto picks up the tale: "*Super Mario 64* was the first game we started, and we began work about one-and-a-half years ago. Actually we started working on an experimental *Super Mario 64* system based around the Super FX chip almost five years ago. Unfortunately, though, this didn't come to fruition so it's only been about 18 months since we put the *Mario* team on the project and started using the Onyx development workstations. It's possibly the shortest development schedule yet for a *Super Mario* game."

Which should instill either great confidence or no small amount of doubt, depending whether you see it as Ninty being able to make the switch to 3D remarkably easily, or that a flagship title should never have such a meagre development period...

"I wanted to make a game that looks like an 3D interactive cartoon." **Shigeru Miyamoto**

Nice suit, Shigs. Now how about telling us how you make games so very special, huh? Oh go on.

There was certainly a concern that some of the games seen so far are not making full use of the N64's unique effects. How does Miyamoto see them? "I think if you carefully watch every little thing in the *Mario* game you can see these techniques being used, but concerning the other games, some developers are not yet using such effects. Actually, these technologies that are hyped in the specifications are something that you can incorporate at the very last moment of the development schedule."

Mario as he's about to enter a new level through a giant picture with a brilliant rippling effect that's only possible with the NU64.

Bowser's flamey breath is made real thanks to the N64's graphical effects.

We've only recently seen Shigs' last videogame, of course, in the form of *Yoshi's Island* – a game that's going to be difficult to beat, even in a 3D environment. "I think *Yoshi's Island* is a game that emphasizes the fun that can be had in 16-bit games," says Miyamoto. "But there are always limitations in making something intensified. As a creator I wanted to make something new and to widen the experience possible [with *Super Mario 64*]. I am not talking only about adding a 3D aspect, but I am talking about really improving the gameplay. It is this new dimension of gameplay I want to include in *Super Mario 64*."

Wa-hey! Mario collects bonus coins on a journey down a slippy slope. (Whose happy face is that?)

Yes, Mario can actually *sneak up* on enemies in an effort not to wake them.

Knowing exactly what to expect from a 3D projection from such a popular genre is a tricky business. "It's very difficult to compare between the existing *Super Mario* games and *Super Mario 64*," Miyamoto confirms. "We must consider them as two different kinds of games. Personally, I wanted to make a game that looks like an 3D interactive cartoon. I wanted to create a small garden where Mario can meet real-time 3D characters and the player would be able to move the character with the

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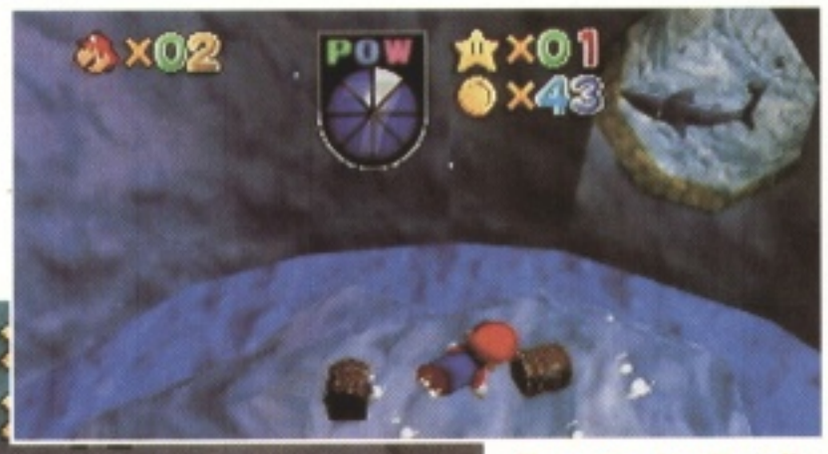
controller just like in a real cartoon."

According to Miyamoto, old hands at *Mario* games may not necessarily find the transition to a 3D version a comfortable one: "Frankly speaking, I wanted to make a game that every kind of player could play so that there would no advantage for players with experience. However, I think those



The watery levels really are something worth writing home about. Here, Mario dives to open a treasure chest.

You can swim all around Bowser's huge battlesub. This is what we call a videogame.

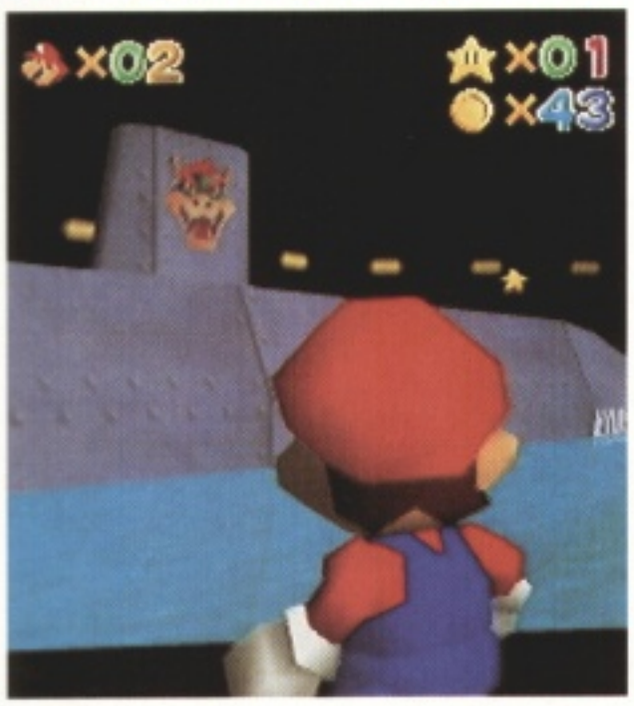
On the title screen of the game you can pull Mario's features around in real time. We know not why.

The SGI technology at the Ultra 64's heart makes it a breeze to generate translucency effects. See?

power? "I think only 50% of the machine's full capacity was revealed today. More great things can be done but at least we were able to show what the Nintendo 64 was able to do."

Although it's the game nearest to completion, *Super Mario 64* is hardly the be-all and end-all title for the system. "Because I'm the director of *Super Mario 64* this is obviously the project I'm involved with the most and consequently the most excited about. I'm also interested in the outcome of *Pilotwings* and I've got high hopes for *Wave Race* which I think could be a really exciting game."

But many gamers' most



Bowser's gone up in the world: he now has his own personal submarine. Go pop him one, Mario.

Most of the typical *Mario* levels are present in the 64 version, like this lava section, where our plumbing pal has burnt his bot.

familiar with traditional digital controls may have some trouble adjusting to the new analogue control stick, but of course, once they do they'll find it a much more rewarding experience. I expect that first-time *Mario* players will take to the analogue joystick quicker than those players who are used to traditional controls."

Perhaps most importantly, how well does *Super Mario 64* show off the finished hardware's

The further you push the joystick, the faster Mario runs – very handy when you're being chased...

Turn over for more Mario and even more NIntendo 64 games

SHOSHINKAI, JAPAN — NINTENDO 64 UNEI

eagerly awaited game of '96 must surely be The Bulky Drive version of *Zelda*. Having designed the original, is he excited about the prospect of such a landmark N64 update? "Yes, very much. Personally, I think *Zelda* should have been in 3D right from the beginning. And although I shouldn't talk about it right now, I'm very interested in the potential of the writable storage device which should give the players more game time and even greater levels of gameplay depth."

Finally, what does he think of the current state of play on the Saturn and PlayStation? "Allow me to say very frankly that, yes, some of the games are really good. But when I say good I mean they are usually just good conversions of arcade games. These developers are simply following a project set by hardware companies. To my eyes, much of the other software looks poor and many of these games seem experimental."

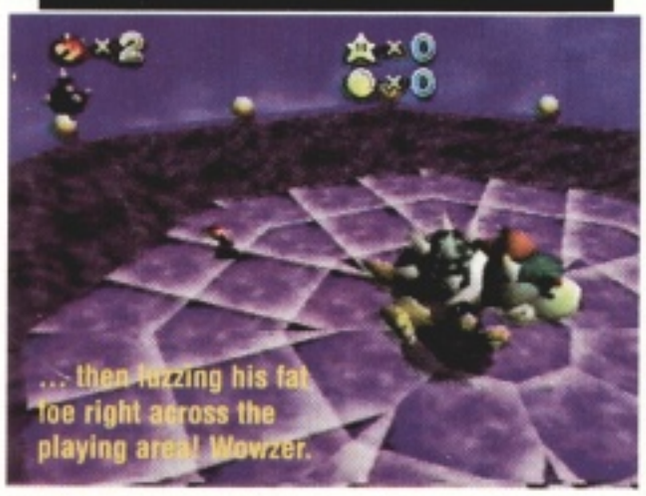
A Swinging Time

The Shoshinkai version of *SM64* included one boss character – but what a boss character he is. And wait till you see how Mario goes about dealing with him...

"Waagh!" goes Mario, having had his rump roasted by Bowser's breath.

Having snuck behind him, he grabs onto the beshelled one's tail...

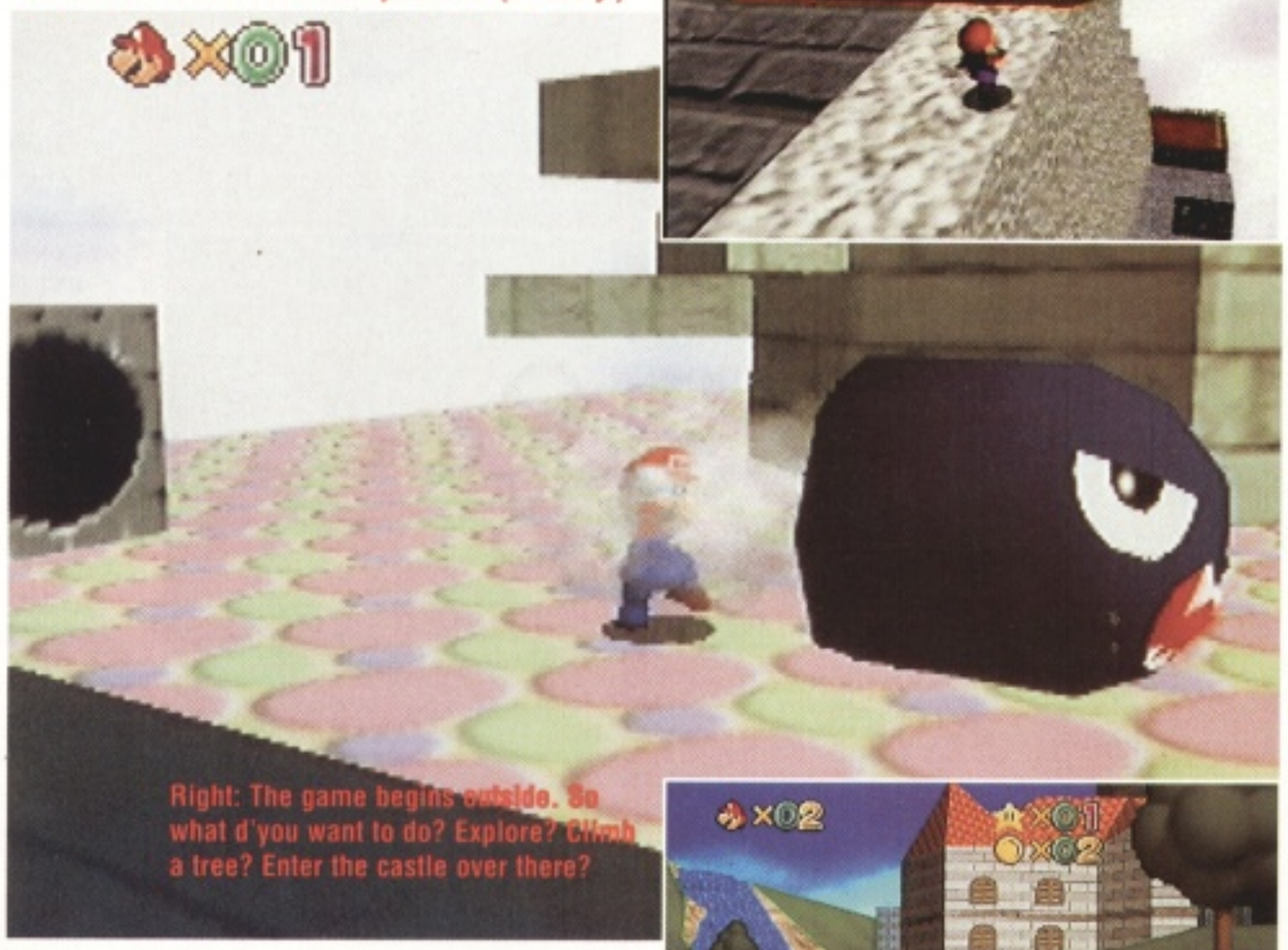
... and does a very passable impression of an Olympic hammer thrower, spinning...



... then fuzzing his fat foe right across the playing area! Wowzer.

Yes, those standard *Mario* elements are all here, but the analogue stick changes the game's feel totally.

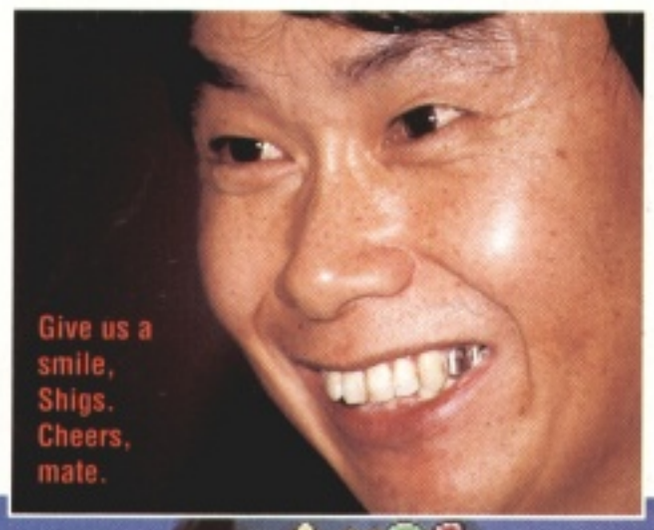
One of the most impressive features of the game is the way in which old faves have been updated. Bullet Bill never looked so impressive. (Or scary.)



Right: The game begins outside. So what d'you want to do? Explore? Climb a tree? Enter the castle over there?

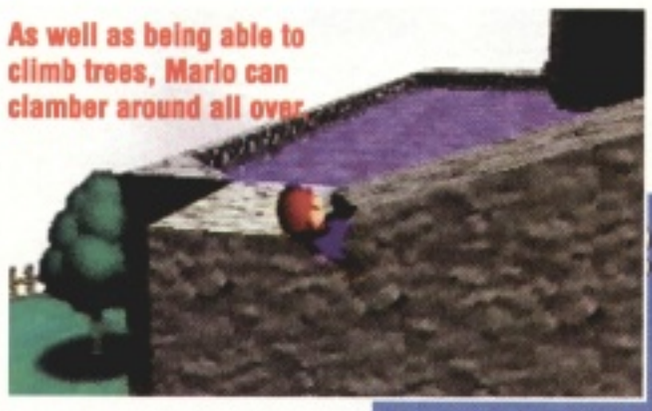
Personally, I think Zelda should have been in 3D right from the beginning. **Shigeru Miyamoto**

Which says it all. Although Sony and Sega will have been installed in Japanese homes for nearly a year-and-a-half by the time Nintendo's machine finally becomes available in April, the big N appears to fear nothing or no-one. And let's face it, when you've got a certain moustachioed plumber up your sleeve, it's understandable.



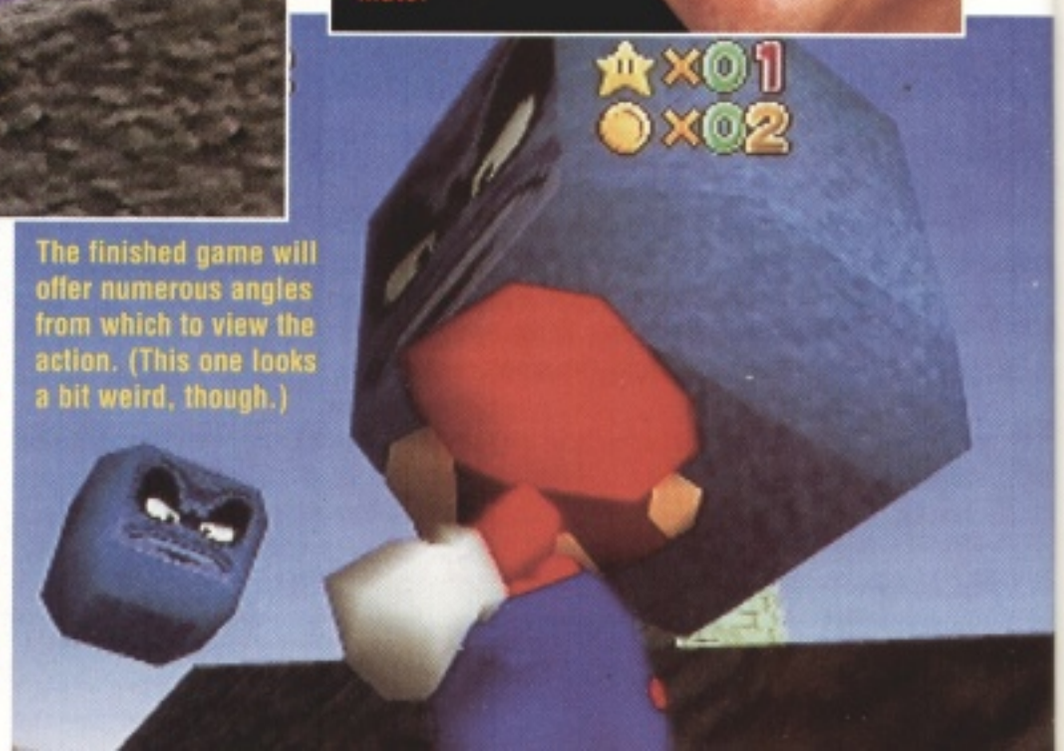
Give us a smile, Shigs. Cheers, mate.

As well as being able to climb trees, Mario can clamber around all over.



Standard Collapsing Platform Goes 3D Shock!

The finished game will offer numerous angles from which to view the action. (This one looks a bit weird, though.)



ZELDA 64

All we've seen of *The Legend Of Zelda* (the N64 version's working title) is an admittedly impressive fight animation sequence between Link (looking a bit Pinocchio-ish in his polygon guise) and an enemy character, complete with stunning reflective armour.

Should be one of the machine's best, obviously.

KIRBY BOWL 64

Another game that's been the stuff of rumours for ages, this Kirby-starrer has turned out to be nothing at all like what was expected. With Mario taking up the challenge of bringing platform games into the third dimension, Nintendo obviously wanted to avoid having a second similar title alongside it, leaving *Kirby Bowl 64* to become a weird cross between race game and multi-player bash-'em-up.

Although currently only 20% complete, the game already offers both one- and multi-player modes. The demonstration single-player game available at Shoshinkai was conducted over undulating checkered backdrops in a straight race to finish; while two or more players taking part switches the format over to a battle-type arena – a skateboard 'bowl'-type arrangement (hence the title). The objective now is simply to knock your opponents out and off of the platform, collecting power-ups to, among other things, swell in size to give you more momentum.

While its graphics were identifiably that of Kirby's candy-coated world made 'real', there's an awkward grapical similarity to Sony's *Motor Toon GP* – with the PlayStation game coming off not too badly at all, thank you squire, as far as comparisons go. Tons of game options are planned and the multi-player option in particular is appealing, offering an oddly similar experience to that of the unforgettable Radio Control mode in *Stunt Race FX*.

While the game never threatened to steal away any of *Mario*'s thunder at Shoshinkai (but then could any game hope to?), *Kirby* is shaping up to be another typically twee and tightly-designed package set to pop out of Nintendo's labs during '96. You'll all buy it regardless, anyway...

MARIO KART R

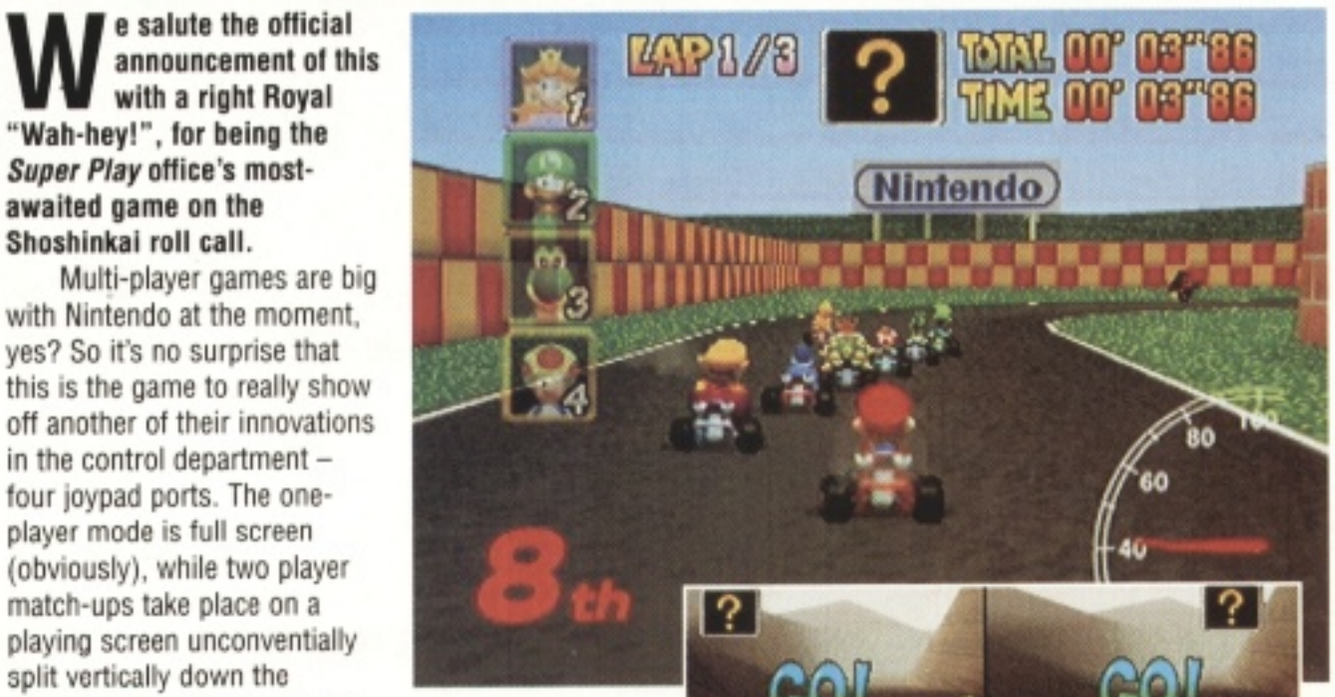
We salute the official announcement of this with a right Royal "Wah-hey!", for being the *Super Play* office's most-awaited game on the Shoshinkai roll call.

Multi-player games are big with Nintendo at the moment, yes? So it's no surprise that this is the game to really show off another of their innovations in the control department – four joypad ports. The one-player mode is full screen (obviously), while two player match-ups take place on a playing screen unconventially split vertically down the middle, and the four-player as four windows á la *Celebrity Squares*.

When asked what they wanted to see in *Super Mario Kart 64*, eight out of ten potential owners said hills, jumps, tunnels, that sort of thing. And that's exactly what Nintendo are delivering: *MKR* introduces all those features and more in order spruce up the pancake-like Mode 7 original.

As is the case in *Super Mario 64*, the in-game characters of *MKR* come to life brilliantly, with each looking as solid as little plasticine models – and animated cheerfullly, too. The promise of some breathtaking replay options also looms, and we understand that there are plans to include at least four tracks for each of the eight characters.

At present the game is far from completion and Nintendo will spend the ensuing months crafting elaborate tracks (right now they look frown-worthily basic) and smoothing out its display (we don't know how many frames per seconds this baby currently runs but they definitely have some work to do).



Turn over for the rest of the Nintendo 64's amazing line-up

SHOSHINKAI, JAPAN — NINTENDO 64 UNE

PILOTWINGS 64

When asked which game he would like to update most for the Ultra 64, Shigeru Miyamoto said *PilotWings*. So it's little surprise that it stands tall in the initial game line-up. But it's not been a question of Shigs sitting down at a development workstation with his graphics tablet and drawing hanggliders and mountain ranges over the screen: this is very much the work of a company that is jumping into the deep end of the videogame pool having never produced a game before, per se.

The relationship goes something like this: large Japanese videogames company (Nintendo) decides to create storming new console with large American computer graphics company (Silicon Graphics), who in turn introduce Nintendo to medium-sized American simulations company (Paradigm). Each is impressed by what they can give the other, with Paradigm's experience in creating military flight sims making them an ideal choice to produce *PilotWings 64* – at a time, of course, when Nintendo's in-house 3D program was in its infancy.

Paradigm's Vice President Of Entertainment Applications, Dave Gatchel, is talking to us from his office in the heart of America's oil industry, in Dallas, and he's going to answer to our probing:

SP At what stage is the game at present?

DG We're up to approximately 60-70% complete. Every aspect of the game is still under development, though, including the game engine, animations, and database content. We're currently planning to add one or two additional levels, some additional characters, and perhaps even another type of vehicle.

SP The game's title screen suggests it has a typically cute Nintendo angle, but this is somewhat at odds with 3D polygons in general, and certainly your own previous work. How difficult has it been to marry your approach with that of Nintendo?

DG Yes, the characters and lots of other parts of the game have a distinctively cartoonish flair. But I don't believe this should necessarily be considered disjoint from a 3D polygon machine. Instead, it should provide the more creative developers with more opportunities and freedom in expressing their ideas and concepts in a game. The capabilities of the machine actually make it possible to see games as a form of interactive cartoon.

Nintendo have been a real pleasure to work with from right from the first day of the project. Although we obviously have a tremendous amount of experience as 3D technologists, we're still relatively new to the game industry. Nintendo were able to guide us on content and gameplay and that's been absolutely invaluable.

SP What will the finished format of the game be? The SNES original offered two combat bonus sections – what should we expect from the

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

LucasArts' most recent offering to the world of videogames, the pointy clicky PC adventure *The Dig* (which was part-planned by some Steven Spielberg or other), has generally been received as lukewarm, so George and his posse have their work cut out in creating what's expected to be one of the hottest third-party N64 titles.

Only one level has so far been shown (one that was exclusively mentioned in these pages some five months agom incidentally) – set on a frozen planetscape over which roam hulking four-legged AT-ATs and the nippier models in Darth's range, the bipedal Scout Walkers (popularised in *Empire* and *Jedi* respectively, as any *Star Wars* will attest). Lots of cheesy red and blue laser gunfire inevitably ensues, with special mentions going to the rendition of your Snowspeeder craft (it's amazing), the obvious potential for lassoing Vader's boys to send them tumbling (heh heh), and being able to fly between baddies' legs (this is what we want).

It's setting itself up to be a game of diverse parts, with later stages planned in the style of PC game *Dark Forces* (read *Doom*) – the prospect of dashing around the Death Star's corridors pumping hot laser death into a rack of Stormtroopers being an especially tasty one. Always a great idea in theory are multi-part games, of course, but it's probably worth counting the number of true classics that fall into the category

(you won't get far past a hand's worth of fingers).

With LucasArts' mammoth resources, there should be enough effort to spread around to each individual section's style and content, and we can only bite our lips and hope that *Shadows* becomes the game it so obviously has the potential to be. (Oh, and Lucas will have to smooth out its frame rate – the Shoshinkai 'version' looked a bit cruddy.)

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equivalent sections of *PW64*?

DG Well, our intention with the update is definitely to provide a clear sense of the original. There are lots of references to the original's aspects all the way; the gameplay is immediately recognizable and we've adapted to fit the proper 3D environment.

Sorry, but the bonus sections are a bit of a secret at the moment...

SP Your background lies with flight/driving sims – how difficult has it been to create a mass-audience console game?

DG Oh, creating a console game has thrown a whole variety of new challenges and problems at us. On the whole, I think we've readily adapted to the situation and that the experience has been positive all the way. Our relationship with Nintendo helped tremendously, of course – they provided the

creative direction for the game and always showed exactly why they're a world-renowned game development company.

SP From what we've seen of the N64's performance

we've seen it doesn't seem that far short of a low-end SGI workstation in power. Your experience in the field of traditional SGI workstations is extensive, so how do you yourselves think Nintendo's machine really compares?

DG The Ultra 64 compares quite favourably with low-end SGI workstations, as it happens. With our background being high-end graphics simulation and training applications, we were concerned at first about obvious performance trade-offs. But when we actually sat down and reviewed the system architecture and specifications, we were amazed just how many features and capabilities would be available on the system. The specific features themselves didn't shock us, of course, it was the fact that these feature and capabilities would be made available on a machine at $250!

SP Thanks, Dave. Be sure to give our regards to J.R. and Miss Ellie.

STARFOX 64

Fox McCloud and his chums make a welcome return in *Starfox 64*, the neat-looking pseudo-sequel to the premiere SNES Super FX game.

It's not presently clear whether Argonaut shared programming and design duties with Nintendo (as they did in the original), but company big cheese Jez San was present at Shoshinkai, so there's every chance this is another Brit/Japanese co-production.

The game format remains the same (bit of planet-based action, followed by some deep-space stuff, etc.), and many of the familiar craft from the first game appear, albeit with a fresh lick of Ultra 64 paint.

Its giant walker robots are impressive, but its cityscapes (which Wil claims look like Harlow) are dull and lacking in atmosphere. Still, it should be another goodie, and we're quietly optimistic.

Turn over for Wave Race 64, Buggie Boogie and Body Harvest

SHOSHINKAI, JAPAN — NINTENDO 64 UN

BUGGIE BOOGIE

Think Interplay's *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* colliding with Namco's *Cybersled* in a dark futuristic world, 'cos that's what this collaborative effort from Angel Studios and Shigeru Miyamoto appears to be.

Very little is known about the game's format, although Ninty have claimed you'll have a great amount of control over how your vehicles are constructed – you'll be able to purchase extra body parts and weaponry as the game progresses, with each alteration you make changing the physical appearance of your battle machine.

It's doesn't quite look like the stuff of dreams at this stage, and certainly far from being as graphically appealing as the imaginative SGI shorts that Angel have created in the past (notably their pop video for Peter Gabriel's *Kiss That Frog*).

Although Angel's game has always been referred to as one particular Ultra 64 game produced in close partnership with Ninty's Shigeru Miyomoto, it's now known that Miyamoto oversaw the production of every Dream Team game, but not in as hands-on a capacity as was believed. How this will be reflected in their finished efforts is anyone's guess.

From pop video creators to videogame authors – quite a transition. The results will certainly be interesting to watch.

WAVE RACE 64

If it were possible to see inside someone's brain with some bizarre kind of X-ray machine, you may also have seen 'F-Zero update' lying alongside 'Super Mario Kart update' had you been rummaging though the compartment marked 'Things To Do' inside Shigeru Miyamoto's during in the past few years.

Already described by numerous Nintendo employees as "*F-Zero* on water", *Wave Race 64* is in fact an update of a relatively little-known Game Boy title of a similar name. There are certainly no neon-lit futurescapes to buzz through at speeds of 300 KM/h: the levels Nintendo have shown include rough stonework scenery and architecture that's far from *Flash Gordon*.

Naturally there'll be a host of variably-powered boats to choose from, each one able to expand and withdraw its hydrofoil-type side bits, presumably to increase speed, or possibly in order to squeeze between track obstacles. Special Things about "*F-Zero* on water" include James Bond-esque jumps and its incredible use of the Ultra 64's translucency effects to produce the most accurate representation of H_2O ever seen in a game.

Still a long, long way to go on this one, but consider for a moment how many other racing games there are which are set on water…

They call it originality, we think.

BODY HARVEST

The most surprising member of the Ultra 64 development 'Dream Team' (Well, *you* tell us what noteworthy software they'd done before signing with Nintendo, other than *Lemmings*), DMA Design had the inviting-sounding *Body Harvest* to show for their last year or so's labouring.

Loosely a *Starfox* on land, the game presents you with the not-at-all-surprising task of fending off an alien invasion. This simple premise kicks off a journey across the sprawling outdoors with you sat at the controls of one of a diverse range of vehicles (of which it's been claimed there are around 80 available in total), each presenting its own handling and performance quirks, a gameplay factor that's presumably heightened by the N64's groundbreaking joypad.

Kicking botty is high on the agenda, of course, so expect shooty hardware on a military warzone scale and explosions by the barrel load. Broken down into stages, you collect a new plaything at various intervals, while the action is conducted against a vivid backdrop of rolling hills, buildings and beaches.

What looks most fun, though, is the opportunity to leave your current craft and go out and about on foot – the scale of your little chappie when placed against alien warcrafts adding immeasurably to *Harvest*'s atmosphere.

Nintendo have yet to even claim release dates for just about every N64 game due next year, and *Body Harvest* is no exception. What we've seen so far looks very tasty, forcing us to admit that perhaps these *Lemmings* boys do have something, after all…

More? For Rare's two Nintendo 64 releases turn to page 30

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you can't buy this.

About to buy a new games machine?
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Yes.
32 bit CD machines are fine, but they don't cut it where it really counts.
They just don't have the power.
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But do you really want something less powerful?

WAIT FOR IT...

Nintendo®

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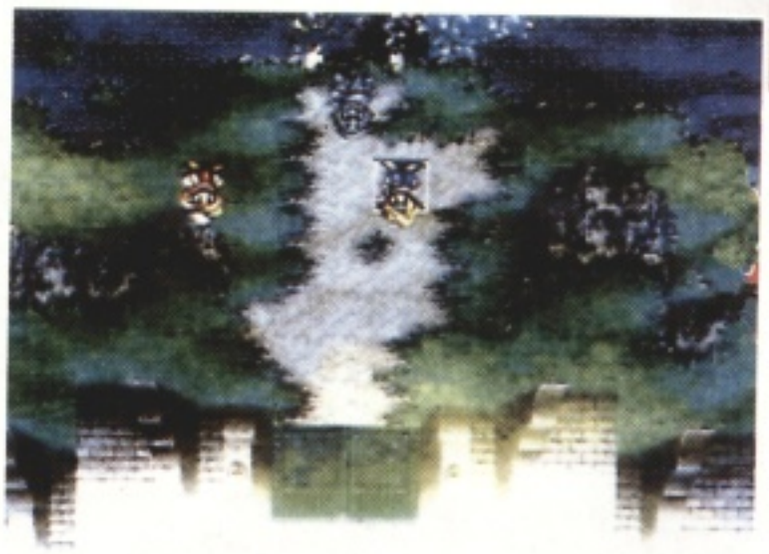
FANTA

Are you the kind of person who always wanted to raise dragons in your backyard and set them on your enemies? The latest game from Square lets you do just that.

Top mist effects always make us sigh: "Ahhh, isn't that lovely".



Bahamaut Lagoon

Square Soft ● 24 Mbit
9 February 1996 (Japan)

Some two years in the making it may have been, but *Bahamaut Lagoon* seems to have popped out of nowhere **into the Square Soft release schedule. This gives them no less than three games for release within the first quarter of '96, and none of them are less than 24Mbit.**

What makes *Bahamaut Lagoon* different is that it takes *Front Mission's* simulation/RPG style and transfers it to a *Final Fantasy*-type scenario.

The story, in a nutshell, is about dragons. Sauzer, the emperor of the city of Gran-Beross in the sky kingdom of Orelus is on a quest. And what is that quest? To find the truth about the legendary dragons that (cue typical fantasy scenario) give whoever owns them some top super power. Of course, there is a small but dedicated band who are determined to thwart Sauzer's plans and it's on the small floating island of Thede that platoon soldier Bieu (View?) first encounters the resistance. From then on it's a fantasy *Front Mission* skirmish game but with enough story and character elements to stop it falling into the boredom trap that befell the PlayStation title *Arc The Lad*.

In total there are 30 different battle maps for you to fight your way through. As in *Front Mission* and more recently *Tactics Ogre*, all enemies are visible on the map with the screen changing to a *Final Fantasy* side-on view when in battle. To make up for the lack of an isometric landscape, the characters in *Lagoon* can alter the lay of the land by magic (freezing rivers, blowing up walls, etc.) thereby creating a tactical advantage, but the most significant difference in *Lagoon* are the scaly creatures themselves. Not only can your characters use dragons in battle but they are also responsible for their upbringing. Feeding your monster pet on tasty morsels such as armour, books, weapons and even poison dictates their characteristics. It's no good bringing up a super-powered dragon if he's a bit on the thick side – a healthy, well-balanced

Big dragons are the order of the day in *Bahamaut Lagoon*. Treat them nice and they'll have a pop on your behalf.

"Hey Emperor, we're sorry our dragon did its business in your garden. Can we have our ball back?"

Waiting for your dragon to come home can be a lonely business.

Bizarre bosses are good, say *Super Play*, and we should know.

Are Square pushing their staff too far with all these releases?

There are 30 of these battle maps to complete before you can call yourself a 'Dragon Master'. Bet Zy does it in a couple of days.

ASY QUEST

by Wil Overton

specimen is your goal. As well as 'normal' beasts there are also God dragons which seem to act like the espers in *FFVI(III)* to give the party a super attack.

The battle area looks a bit like *Arc The Lad*. Let's hope it plays better though, eh kids?

Overseeing *Bahamaut Lagoon* is *Final Fantasy* and *Chrono Trigger* producer Hironobu Sakaguchi, who admits that he's a great fan of sim/RPGs and will happily stay up all night playing them. The rest of the team is made up from younger staff at Square, a factor which Sakaguchi hopes will give *Lagoon* an energy and vitality that sets it apart from other Square games. Certainly, the graphics are very striking (the depiction of the dragons in particular, looking like they've been bashed out of sheet metal), and are much more in the 'moody and magnificent' style of *Final Fantasy* than *Chrono* and *Mana*'s bright, lush artwork.

Hmmm... spooky castle. Hey Fred, you go with Daphne.

Of course, there's absolutely no word yet on *Bahamaut Lagoon* getting a Western translation, but with *Front Mission* being perfectly playable (Zy's *still* hogging our cart) we have high hopes for being able to get through the Japanese version.

Side-viewed *Final Fantasy*-style antics.

Come February, *Super Play* will be there in the kingdom of Orelus, rearing some top dragonage...

More side-viewed *Final Fantasy*-style fight antics.

When the Emperor of Gran-Beross discovers that there be dragons nearby he decides that they must be the pets for him. Yes siree!

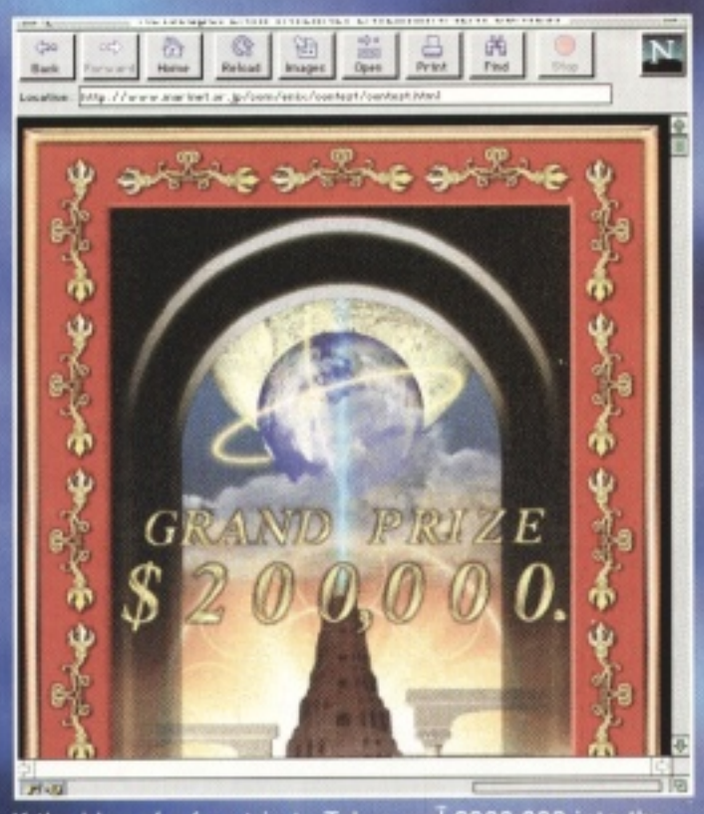
Graphics in *Bahamaut Lagoon* are probably the nearest to *Final Fantasy VI(III)* we'll get until *FFVIII*. Probably.

Quest snippets

● By the time you read this the mighty RPG steamroller that is *Dragon Quest VI* will be slowly rumbling its way across the Japanese charts, no doubt crushing everything in its path. Creators Enix are so certain of *DQ*'s status of top SFC RPG that the initial cartridge run is a massive three million units! If mumblings from across the Atlantic are to be believed we could be seeing a Western translation under the monicker of *Dragon Warrior VI* (even though it will be the first experience of a *DQ* game for many players) as soon as summer next year.

Even though it still looks a little rough around the graphics, *DQVI* looks set to win the hearts of Japanese RPGers.

● Enix are also offering a whopping $200,000 in a worldwide game search contest launched on their new Internet site. You've got until October next year to come up with an original game that runs on either a PC or Mac and in the meantime Enix will keep everyone up to date with developments and FAQs from the Net page. Coo.



If the idea of a free trip to Tokyo and £200,000 into the bargain appeals to you, then now's the time to brush up on those programming skills...

Fantasy

● The RPG that has everyone in Japan talking at the moment is Namco's *Tale Of Phantasia* which comes on the SFC's first 48Mbit cart. Not only do each of the characters have digitised voices to shout attacks and cast spells but there's also a full title song in there too! Apparently *Phantasia* totally kicked the stuffing out of *Dragon Quest VI* in Nintendo's internal rating process.

● Nintendo have announced a follow-up to their 1994 strategy/RPG *Fire Emblem*, which promises an updated artificial intelligence system and generally much tougher gameplay. At (what seems to be becoming the norm) a massive 32Mbit, *Fire Emblem 2* is due out in March '96.

JAPAN GAME WATCH

Yes, this month Japan Game Watch comes to you from the Shoshinkai Software Exhibition '95. It's easy to forget about the SNES when the Ultra 64 has just muscled in on the gaming scene, but we've dug around the SFC scene to pick some precious nuggets from amongst the traditional surfeit of Mah Jong and Horse Racing variants.

First, and most excitingly, is a massive new *Kirby* game. Displayed in an area of the show rather oddly referred to as the Symbolic Zone (essentially the bit where the highest-profile carts were presented), *Kirby Super Deluxe* is a Hal Laboratory/Nintendo co-production which tips the scales at a sweaty great 32 megabits. It's essentially a collection of six separate *Kirby* games, each one delivered with its own full presentation, storyline and endings. The key part of the package is probably the remake of the original Game Boy *Kirby* game, shown here in all its colour-soaked glory. The hand-held version has become famous for offering immense playability but very little challenge (one member of the *Super Play* crew actually completed it on their first go), so we're naturally hoping for some stricter difficulty

Game merchandise of the month! These seeds promoted a 'gardening' RPG at the show!

sensibilities in this section. The second of the six offers similar gameplay while allowing the Kirbster to swallow enemies and take on their abilities. The remaining four go like this: dungeon exploration affair, action game allowing Kirby to learn and collect various skills, racing game, and another take on the standard *Kirby* platform format. It's coming in February, and should at least be making it to the States by the summer.

Konami drew the crowds at Shoshinkai with their *Power Pro Wrestling '96*, partly because the Japanese are still mad on the 'sport', seeking out anything featuring a spandex-clad buttock they can get their hands on, and partly because it's one super dream treat of a looker. Following the trend set by Rare, they've gone to town with pre-rendered 3D wrestlers on this one and produced something that'd not look out of place on a PlayStation. The action is accompanied by Konami's voice commentary system to give that true Saturday-afternoon-with-Dickie-Davies experience (er, except in Japanese, obviously).

These were the two stand-out games, and we'll be covering the other notables in next month's ish, along with the RPGs that were big news at the event. See you then.

Kirby does his sucky blowy stuff (top and middle), while Konami's *Power Pro Wrestling* looks funky.

WIN WIN WIN WIN WIN

AAAHH!!! REAL FREEBIES!

Want to win one of six copies of Viacom's not unattractive new platformer, *Aaahh!! Real Monsters!!*, do you? Bit handy with a drawing implement, are you? Then all you have to do, in classic John Noakes on *Blue Peter* fashion, is design and name a fourth character to go with the three blighters here. Marks will be awarded for most original critter and most fitting name, with bonuses available for anything particularly warped. So get slapping something on a piece of A4 and we'll print the six best in issue 42.

Send your entries to 'I Know This Looks Like Wil, But It Wasn't Intentional, Honest Compo', at the usual address.

The closing date is February 8 1996 and usual compo rules apply. Go for it.

DOH!

Due to some crossed wires during the production of last month's issue, a rather significant mistake slipped into our 'UK SPEED FIX' news story (page 10). The service that's planned (you know, the one that can only happen if there's enough interest from you lot) does *not* alter your console's running speed. It does, however, affect the *size* of the display, meaning that you can use a UK console and get a full-screen image, just like you can with US and Japanese models.

So, if you're interested in full-*screen* gaming, send us a postcard or sealed-down envelope marked with 'I Want Full Screen Gaming' along with your name and address. Sincere apologies are due to anyone we misled.

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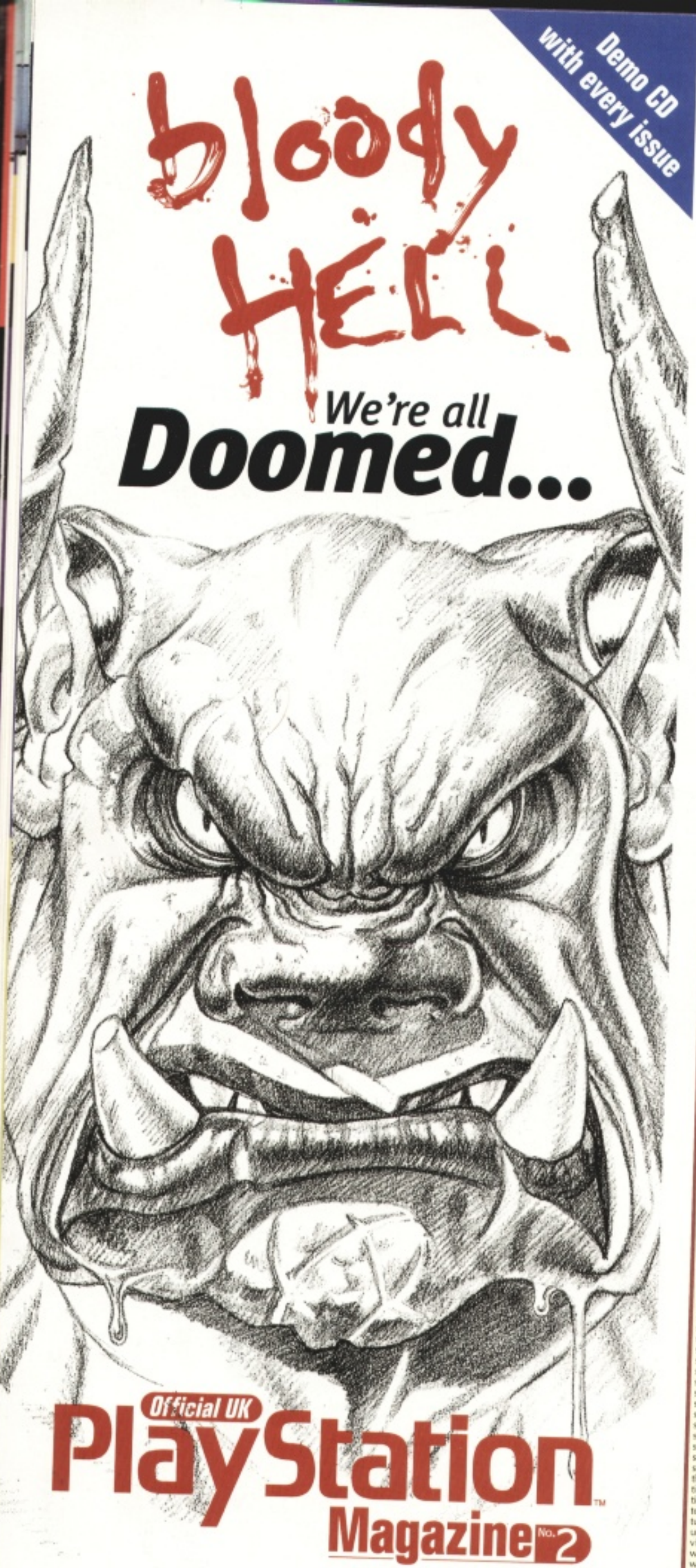

Official UK PlayStation Magazine No.2

On sale January 9th

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Megadrive

	i	ii	iii
addams family values	25	15	20
aladdin	20	10	15
animaniacs	18	9	13
asterix-grt rescue	15	7	11
asterix-pwr of gods	23	12	17
batman returns	10	5	7
batman forever	27	15	20
body count	13	6	9
boogerman	17	8	12
boxing legends of ring	17	8	12
brian lara cricket	27	15	20
brutal paws of fury	20	10	15
bubsy 2	15	7	11
cannon fodder	23	12	17
castle of illusion	10	5	7
castlevania	15	7	11
clayfighter	23	12	17
cliffhanger	12	6	8
cool spot	15	7	11
comix zone	28	18	22
desert strike	15	7	11
dragon	15	7	11
dragons revenge	15	7	11
dune 2	24	13	18
dynamite heady	22	12	17
earthworm jim 2	32	17	25
ecco the dolphin	15	7	11
eternal champions	15	7	11
f1 racing	22	10	17
f1 world champ	24	13	18
f117 night storm	15	7	11
fatal fury	12	6	8
fever pitch	23	12	17
fifa 96	30	18	23
flink	20	10	15
flintstones	14	7	10
flintstones-ocean	25	15	20
gauntlet 4	15	7	11
general chaos	15	7	11
greatest heavyweights	17	8	12
gunstar heroes	17	8	12
incredible hulk	12	6	8
james pond 3	13	6	9
jimmy white snooker	20	10	15
john madden 95	20	10	15
judge dredd	27	16	20
jungle book	26	15	20
jungle strike	18	9	13
jurassic park	15	7	11
kawasaki superbikes	24	12	18
kick off 3	17	8	12
landstalker	28	15	20
lemmings	15	7	11
lemmings 2	17	8	12
lion king	23	12	17
lotus 2 recs	13	6	9
max carnage	17	8	12
mega bomberman	23	12	17
mega games 3	13	6	9
mega turrican	15	7	11
mickey mania	17	8	12
micro machines 2	25	15	20
micro machines '96	28	16	22
mortal kombat	15	7	11
mortal kombat 2	25	15	20
mortal kombat 3	30	20	23
mr nutz	20	10	15
nba tournament	25	15	20
nba showdown	15	7	11
nhl '95	20	10	15
nhl '96	27	15	20
pete sampras '96	27	15	20
pga european tour	18	9	13
pga 3	22	12	17
pga 96	30	18	23
phantasy star IV	32	20	25
pitfall	20	10	15
powerdrive	24	14	19
power rangers	28	15	22
primal rage	28	16	22
psycho pinball	22	12	17
ristar	22	12	17
road rash	12	6	8
road rash 2	17	8	12
road rash 3	22	12	17
rugby '95	18	8	13
sensible soccer	20	10	15
sensible soccer inter	22	12	17
shining force	25	15	20
shining force 2	27	15	21
shining in darkness	16	8	12
sonic & knuckles	20	10	15
sonic 3	25	15	20
sparkster	16	8	12
stargate	15	7	11
streets of rage 3	23	12	17
striker	26	15	20
subterrania	15	7	11
sunset riders	18	9	13
supermonaco 2	12	6	8
super SF2	27	15	22
syndicate	20	10	15
theme park	27	15	22
tiny toons	15	7	11
tiny toons - allstars	18	9	13
toys	15	7	11
turtles tourn fighter	20	10	15
urban strike	22	12	17
virtua racing	32	20	24
world of illusion	12	6	8
wwf royal rumble	20	10	15
wwf raw	22	12	17
zero tolerance	15	7	11
zombies	15	7	11

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If you are buying or trading against games, please call for availability before sending cheques. List the games you are trading along with their trade-in prices as well as the games you are purchasing with their prices. Do not forget to add carriage (see below)

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	i	ii	iii
air combat	29	20	23
destruction derby	30	20	24
discworld	30	20	24
doom	32	20	25
jumping flash	28	17	21
kileak the blood	28	17	21
lemmings 3d	29	19	23
mortal kombat III	32	20	25
nba jam	26	15	20
novastorm	28	17	21
raiden	28	17	21
rapid reload	26	15	20
rayman	30	20	24
ridge racer	30	20	24
striker	30	20	24
tekken	32	22	25
theme park	30	20	24
toshinden	29	19	23
total eclipse	28	17	21
wipeout	28	17	21
xcom	28	17	21

3do

	i	ii	iii
blade force	29	18	23
demolition man	20	10	15
fifa	17	8	12
rebel assault	18	9	13
return fire	22	11	17
road rash	20	10	15
space hulk	29	18	23
street fighter II	23	12	17
syndicate	25	14	20
w. commander III	27	15	22

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Snes

	i	ii	iii
addams family values	22	12	17
aladdin	20	10	15
animaniacs	20	10	15
batman forever	25	15	20
biker mice from mars	20	10	15
blackhawk	20	10	15
bomberman 2	18	9	14
bomberman 3	32	20	25
cannon fodder	25	14	20
castlevania v... kiss	25	15	20
clayfighter 2	25	15	20
desert fighter	16	7	12
donkey kong	25	15	20
dragon	20	10	15
earthworm jim	25	15	20
empire strikes back	23	12	17
f1 champ edition	25	15	20
fifa 96	32	20	25
ghoul patrol	15	7	11
give 'n' go	32	20	25
int. superstar soccer	23	12	16
int. s. s. deluxe	30	20	23
judge dredd	25	15	20
jungle book	25	15	20
jungle strike	27	16	21
kawasaki challenge	25	15	20
killer instinct	32	20	25
lamborghini challenge	20	10	15
lemmings 2	20	10	15
lion king	25	15	20
lord of the rings	22	12	17
mario kart	22	12	17
mario paint	23	13	18
maximum carnage	20	10	15
mega man x	17	8	12
mickey mania	18	9	14
micro machines	20	10	15
mortal kombat 2	22	10	16
mortal kombat 3	32	22	25
nba jam tour	25	15	20
nba jam live 95	17	8	13
newman-hass indy/mansell	20	10	15
pga golf	20	10	15
pitfall	18	9	13
pocky & rocky 2	20	10	15
powerdrive	22	12	17
power rangers	22	12	17
primal rage	27	17	22
punch out	20	10	15
putty squad	22	12	17
return of the jedi	25	15	20
rise of the robots	14	7	10
rock & roll racing	24	14	19
samurai showdown	25	15	20
secret of mana	23	12	17
sen. soccer ltd	22	12	17
shadowrun	22	12	17
smash tennis	17	8	12
soccer (mutc)	22	12	17
star wars	17	8	12
street racer	22	12	17
sunset riders	18	9	14
syndicate	22	12	17
t2 arcade	18	9	14
theme park	28	16	22
turtles tour fighters	20	10	15
urban strike	32	20	25
wolfenstein	20	10	15
wwf raw	25	15	20
wwf royal rumble	20	10	15
zelda	17	8	13
zombies	18	9	13

Saturn

	i	ii	iii
bug	28	17	21
daytona	29	19	23
myst	30	20	23
panzer dragoon	25	13	20
rayman	30	20	24
real pinball	29	18	23
robotica	28	17	21
pebble beach golf	28	17	21
shinobi x	29	19	23
v.f. remix	24	12	18

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SUPER PLAY'S HOT LIST

We don't get enough time to play games really, but these are currently 'in'...

ALISON

"I can relate to Dixie, she's a monkey of the '90s with a Cindi Lauper attitude and Debbie Gibson's dress sense," pondered Ali as she started another attempt at *Diddy's Kong Quest*. We just stared.

TONY

Was that small tear in the corner of Tony's eye a rush of nostalgia as he played Super Game Boy *Galaxians*, or just relief that this time around he didn't have to keep pumping 20 pence pieces into a slot to play?

OLLIE

Ollie definitely experienced some anxiety when we tried to separate him from the antics of Spidey and Venom this month. We didn't rate it highly but that hasn't deterred the hero's friend.

WIL

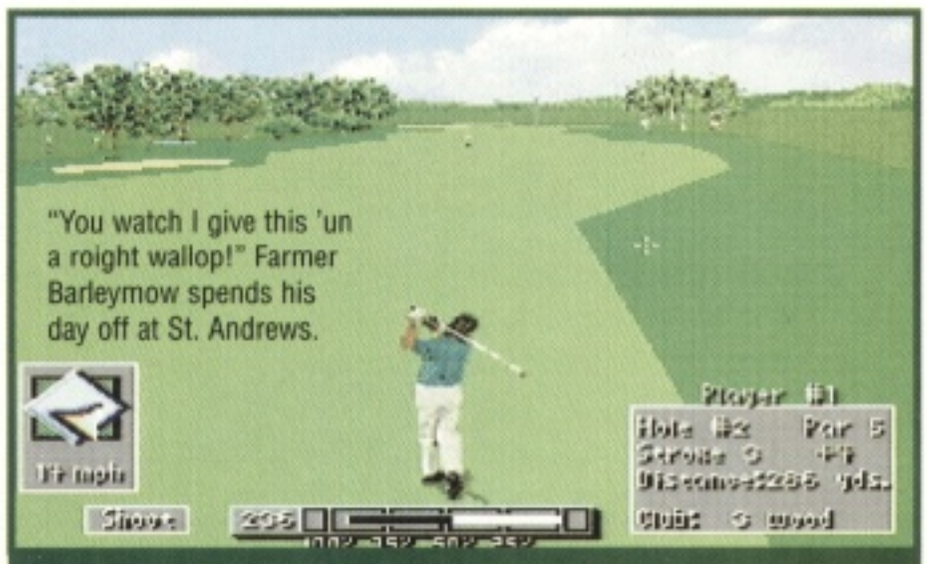
Wil likes *Mario's Picross* and he isn't afraid to let everyone know it (hey, no sniggering you at the back). Even the music select cheat on *Tactics Ogre* hasn't stopped him chipping all the way to level ten.

COMPO WINNERS

The winners of the 'Gimme Those Vids' compo from issue 38 are Martin Payne of Portsmouth and Keith Churchill of Tyneside. Congrats, people, over 33,000 seconds of science fiction/fantasy viewing are on their way to each of you.

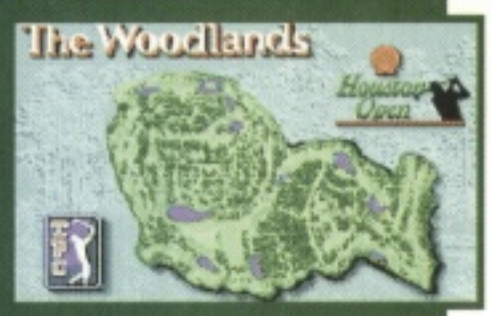
The winner of issue 38's Super Quiz is Adam Foster from Bristol, who wins a copy of *ISS Deluxe* for knowing the following answers: EASY: 1 *Starfox* (a.k.a. *Starwing*) 2 Dixie, 3 Three; MEDIUM: 1 Williams, 2 Five, 3 Hiroshi Yamauchi; HARD: 1 Rush, 2 Bristol Rovers, 3 Simon Harris; END OF LEVEL BOSSES: 1 *Contra Spirits* (a.k.a. *Super Probotector*), *Super Aleste* (a.k.a. *Space Megaforce*), *Actraiser 2*.

Super Quiz will be back next month.



FORE!

PGA Tour '96
Electronic Arts ● 16Mbits



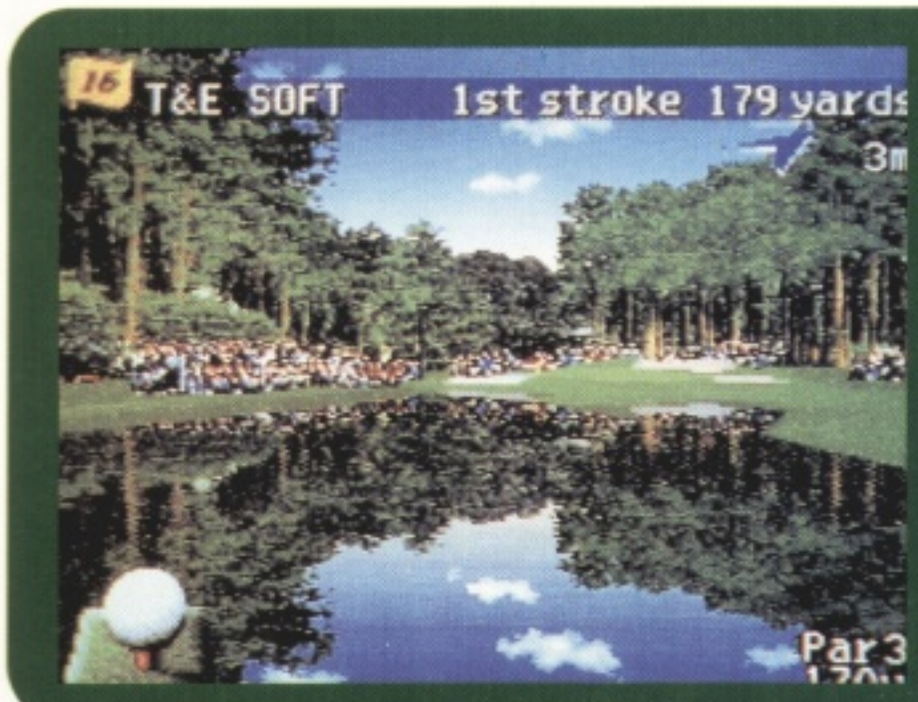
Wouldn't it be great to actually play from this view. No? Pah.

For all their anally-retented club options, pin-point shot accuracy and opportunity for checking wind strength, golf games just aren't as exciting as other sports simulations. Yet somehow a solid 16 megabits of fat blokes getting paid over the odds for wearing comedy trousers and concentrating on hitting their little balls into the same number of slightly-larger holes in fewer shots than the other tub of lard is a good thing. How come? Because you told us so. Loads of you told us so when you bought the last *PGA* game.

PGA Golf is, to date, the best golf game by being an accurate simulation of this odd 'sport'. So *PGA Tour '96* is, you'd assume, an improvement on that winning formula. Ten real American tour players are there, including the now-legendary Fuzzy Zoeller and fat Walrus Stadler, but sadly, due to the licence, there's no opportunity to play as the traditionally slimmer British golfing heroes. Still, nine courses, plenty of clubs and a whopping eight play modes – including tornaments, practise driving ranges and putting greens – may add up to the best golf sim yet.

(Also worth noting is that it's the first SNES game to use Nintendo's SA-1 custom co-processing chip, something that T•HQ claim assists in creating the complex courses.)

Its main (only?) competition arrives in the form of *Harukanaru Augusta Masters New* from Japanese softco T&E Soft. We'll be sticking them in a pullover-covered gut against pullover-covered gut challenge in an issue's time.



Left: *Augusta Masters New* – the better looking game.

Oh the agony of choice. (Which daft V-neck to wear, for a start.)

Left: More *Augusta*. What a fancy power bar system, eh?

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WHAT TYLER?

Revolution X

Acclaim ● 16 Megabits

"Is this, like, an *MTV* video?"
"Uhuhuh. Uhuhuh. Aerosmith. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah."
"But you can, like, shoot people in the video. That's cool. Uhuhuh. Uhuhuh."

Forget those geekoids with CD-ROM drives who wibble about their whale-friendly multimedia Peter Gabriel experience. *Revolution X* stars legendary American rock outfit Aerosmith. They invite you to grow your hair long and shoot things. Cool.

Acclaim's penchant for releasing coin-op conversions surfaces once more on the SNES, this time with the hard graft of development handled by Rage Software. In case you're not an arcade goer, and haven't heard this one screeching away in the corner of your local fleapit, *Revolution X* is essentially a shooting gallery in the *Lethal Enforcers* vein. Moving a gunsight around the screen with joypad or mouse, your task is to blow away the various digitised bad blokes who suddenly pop up on screen before they get a chance to nobble your energy bar with their guns, knives and assegais (no, honestly). Your bizarre arsenal is comprised of rapid fire bullets and Costly Discs: there's a musical motif, see, and flinging CDs like shuriken is a surefire way to take out anything from an armoured patrol car to a helicopter gunship.

What's more, there's this – uhuhuh, uhuhuh – comic plot about rawk music being outlawed, and, like, really cool things being banned, and stuff? Members of Aerosmith, clearly unaccustomed to acting, make personal appearances in the game to offer words of encouragement. When Steven Tyler chucks you his car keys and Joe Perry announces "these guys are putting chemicals in our food!" you'd be an absolute fool not to take them seriously, we reckon.

So how do you fit all those video clips into a 16 megabit cartridge? Quite simply, you can't – but you can store enough digitised images and sound samples to give a reasonable impression, and that's how *Rev X* appears in cartridge format. Those tell-tale pauses between stages of the game hold the answer: a sophisticated compression routine has been employed to fill most of its meggage with graphical shorthand. Listen closely enough and you'll hear it wheezing away as it quickly unpacks huge blocks of graphical data. On the technical front, we were also impressed by the use of Mode 7-style trickey to give the sense of heading down a corridor. Our brief entanglement with *Rev X* revealed a fairly competent use of scaling throughout, but this part of the game – where you explore a warehouse by shooting directional arrows – looked smoother than the business side of a CD. Clever stuff indeed.

Ultimately you know pretty much what you're getting when you buy a game like this, although the success of the conversion can be a deciding factor. Fifty quid equates to a hefty pile of credits in the arcade, after all.

So join us next month, spandex lovers, when we'll be asking that one vital question – *Revolution X*: 'Permanent Vacation' or 'Pump'?

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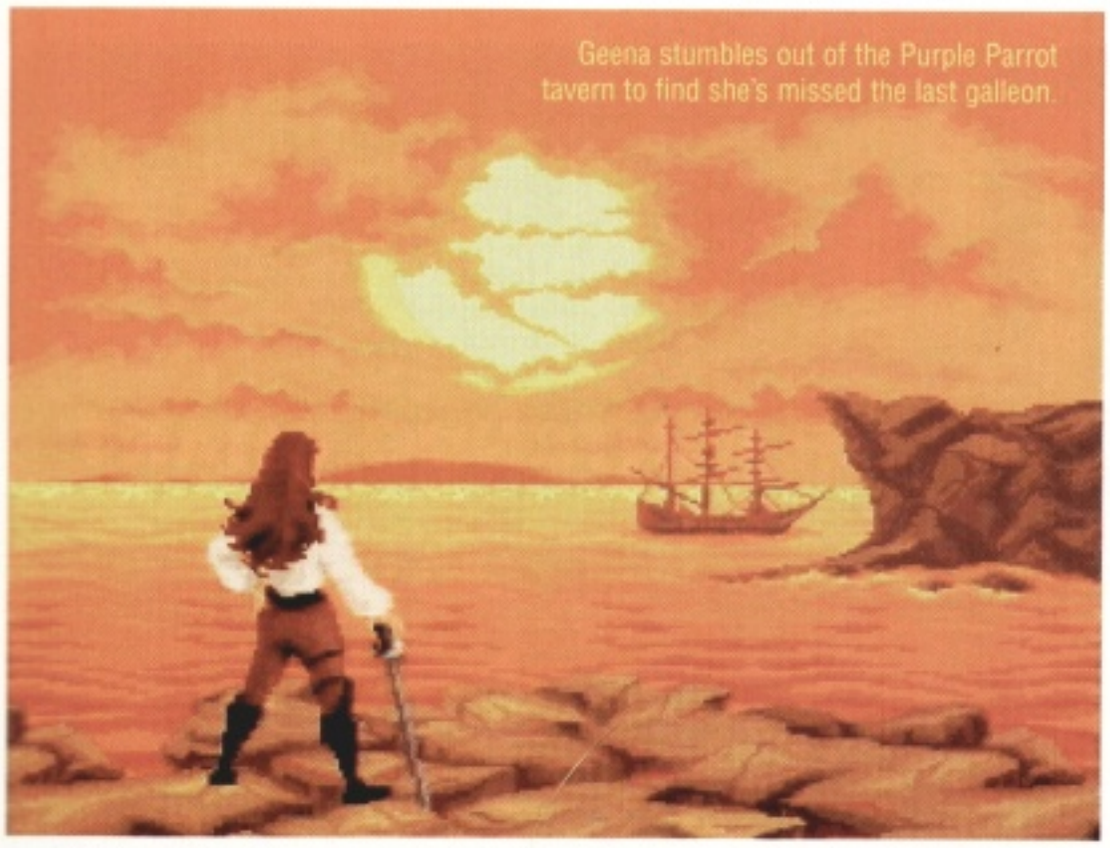


AVAST BEHIND!

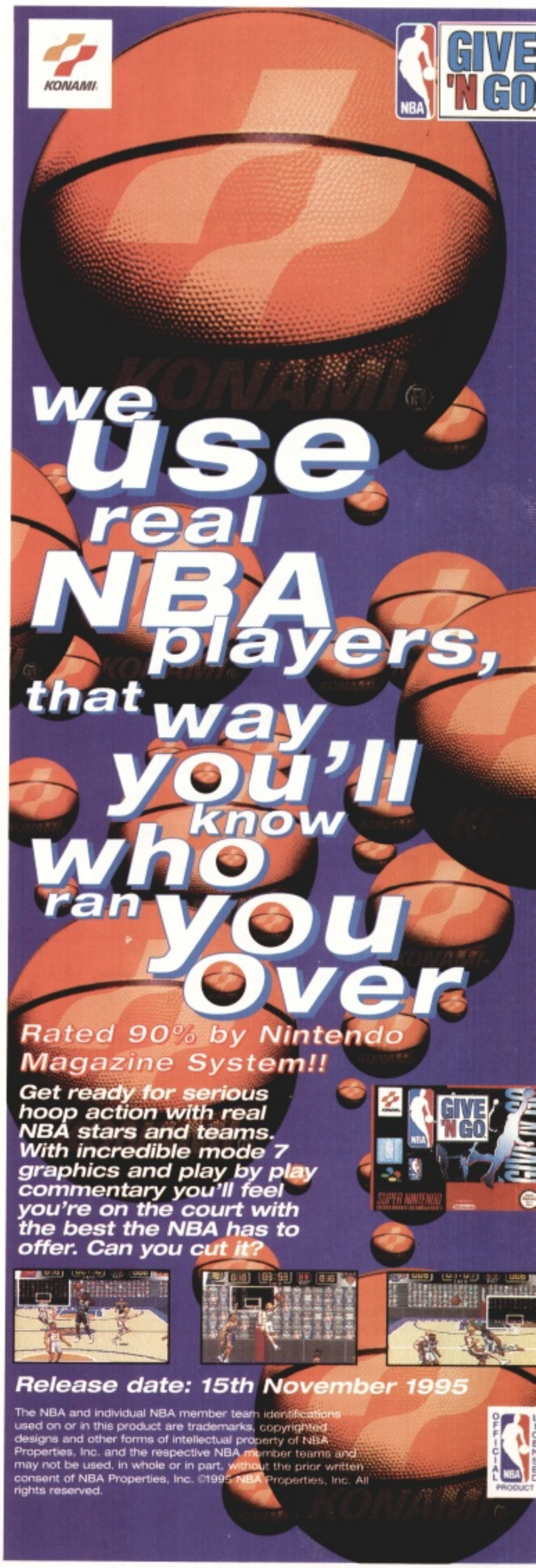
Cut-Throat Island
Acclaim ● 16 Megabits

As we pointed out in *SP*36, this is an Acclaim film licence that doesn't, as you might reasonably expect, feature a digitised Geena Davis in oxygen-stealing bodice. The developers at Software Creations have opted for more traditionally drawn sprite animation, and it's allowed them to take artistic liberties with some fanciful fighting action. If it's swashbuckling on the high seas that sends a Jolly Roger up your flagpole, look no further than *Cut-Throat Island*.

Although it sports a couple of variations – we spotted at least one stage dedicated to the 'runaway mine cart ride' – *Cut-Throat Island* is a scrolling platform fence-'em-up with a little more refinement than the likes of *Legend* or *Golden Axe*. Learning to fight with style is central to the game: enter the seemingly innocuous Option Screen, for instance, and you're not given a pad configuration or sound test but a choice of 'Swordplay' or 'Brawling'. As the game progresses, more advanced fighting moves are added to your repertoire. It's also possible to pick up flintlock pistols and bombs for a limited firefight with the dreaded black powder.

Unfortunately things aren't so jolly on the film set. The company behind *Cut-Throat Island*, Caralco Pictures, filed for bankruptcy on November 10 of last year. Despite its past successes with titles such as *Terminator 2*, the studio was renowned for pouring millions of dollars into the production of its big budget box-office hits and is now paying the price. *Cut-Throat Island* is therefore Carolco's final movie, sadly, and will go on general release in UK cinemas from March 22.

As for the game, expect to see a full review sailing into the *Super Play* harbour next ish. Batten down your hatches and listen out for the tap-thud, tap-thud of a salty old reviewer with lots of very poor parrot jokes.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THE CHARTS

If you're the sort of person who likes to keep a beady eye on which games are selling most, you'll want to check the weekly charts available from those oiks on *Digitiser*, Channel 4's games 'thing' (page 470).

ELSPA – European Leisure Software Publishers Association Ltd

OFFICIAL GALLUP UK SUPER NINTENDO CHART

1	FIFA SOCCER '96	Electronic Arts	SP37 84%
2	KILLER INSTINCT	Nintendo	SP36 85%
3	MICKEY MANIA	Sony Imagesoft	SP26 87%
4	MORTAL KOMBAT 3	Acclaim	SP37 85%
5	INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER DELUXE	Konami	SP38 94%
6	DOOM	Ocean	SP36 92%
7	THEME PARK	Ocean	SP32 91%
8	DONKEY KONG COUNTRY	Nintendo	SP27 90%
9	SUPER BOMBERMAN 3	Virgin	SP37 89%
10	THE MASK	T•HQ	SP38 70%

BLABBERMOUTH

with Kris and Tel

Ooh, my RISC chip. Kris, what the F7E9B82C do you want? I've got ROM corruption like nobody's business.

It's midday, Tel, and you should be up and lubed. That'll teach you to spend your recharge time downloading tens of megabytes of dodgy data from hot Japanese sites. So, how was Shoshinkai? Did you manage lots of hot scoopage?

Forget the press releases, Kris – I've discovered the reality behind the façade. For example, you weren't told that all of the Dream Team developers had worked flat out to submit completed playable demos long before the show, were you? Oh yes, they exist... But at the last minute, NCL's head honcho Hiroshi Yamauchi decided to withdraw them from the display, leaving the world's press to judge the console purely on the basis of Nintendo's own *Mario* and *Kirby* games.

Tchoh! how frustrating. I want to see more, now now now now now! Then again, perhaps this is a typical Nintendo masterstroke? *Super Mario 64* was undoubtedly the smartest choice to display in order to show off the machine's potential. Always leaving the audience wanting more, eh?

Oh, but it doesn't end there. NCL's official Shoshinkai press video, which you're likely to have seen on *GamesMaster* or *Bad Influence*, also showed footage of another eight third party titles. But some of the excerpts used were weeks old, or taken from earlier, less refined demos than the developers had made available. In other words, it didn't exactly show off those games in the best possible light. Cue much disgruntlement and mutterage from the third parties – in private, of course.

Blimey. That's not the sort of thing you hear from the official Nintendo sources, is it? I think I understand what you're talking about now.

Then see what you make of this little rumour. When one British journalist with a sprinkling of Japanese was interviewing Miyamoto with the aid of a Nintendo translator, he thought Miyamoto said something about having five finished carts in his hotel room. A tense private discussion between the translator and Shigs ensued, resolved by the former saying simply that the latter had expressed the opinion we would all be very pleased with the finished games. Hrmmm.

April isn't that far off, Tel. It's not unreasonable to suggest that a few things ought to be finished by now – they're been working on the machine for a year and a half. But can they really be that devious in the art of media manipulation? Ooh, the clever blighters... Now tell me, what's Nintendo's affable genius designer developing right now?

A William Shatner midriff, Kris, if truth be told. See, old Shigeru has recently given up smoking. Oh yes, he used to be quite partial to the noxious fumes of the deadly weed, as *Edge* readers will know, but I recently discovered that he's abandoned cigarettes in favour of sweets. His passion for petite sugary nibbles is now just as strong as his previous addiction, by all accounts. I even heard that Nintendo were paying him in coconut mushrooms for the completion of *PilotWings 64*. Anyway (yawn)...

I suppose I'd better let you get back to downtime, then. You dirty stop-out.

Hey, it's a rough job, but somebody's gotta do it... One last thing before I go – did you hear about the *Yoshi* title coming to the 64? I'll have more info soon...

us designer

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RARE TALENT

FEBRUARY 1996 ISSUE 4

Ten years ago, Ashby de la Zouch, a sleepy town 20 or so miles outside of Leicester, had only two claims to fame. First, it's where KP produced their tasty nuts and crisps, and second, the best computer game developers of the day made their home there. Today you'll still find lorryloads of processed nuttage rumbling out of these parts, but the boys who created such memorable titles as *Knight Lore* and *Killer Instinct* have moved on up the road to the even snoozier Twycross.

Based in a 300-year-old farmhouse building, the company which once traded as Ultimate now goes under the similarly self-congratulatory monicker of Rare. In their original guise, they could do little wrong: hit home computer games tumbled off their production lines with frightening frequency, endowing upon them a near God-like status in the eyes of the joystick-jiggling fraternity at the time.

A Wheel Of Fortune

Then things began to go a bit wonky. Moving from their beloved format, the Sinclair ZX Spectrum (the most popular gaming format at the time), to the Commodore 64 (a machine rapidly growing in stature), proved a hazardous journey, and Ultimate struggled to replicate the magic that had by now become expected of them. The Spectrum hits began to dry up too, and Ultimare quietly slipped away into the videogame ether in the mid-'80s.

Lunar Jetman was an early Speccy effort from Ultimate. Just where *was* the hidden trailer?

In 1984 they were one of the first UK companies to sit around a table with Nintendo to talk about developing for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES). Contracts were promptly signed, and in the years that followed – reborn as Rare Ltd. – their coffers ballooned thanks to sales of a staggering number of titles they produced for the 8-bit box o' tricks. Ironically, many of these games had only hints of what made Ultimate such stars to home computer gamers, and an obvious shift of priorities became apparent. No longer computer game innovators, the company's output included the types of game that'd normally be associated with any average run-of-the-mill code shop. Videogame versions of American quiz shows like *Jeopardy* and *Wheel Of Fortune* may not be ideal material to have on your C.V., but it paid the rent (and then some).

Despite such uninspiring titles, Rare rapidly earned a reputation as expert NES developers with

SOFTOGRAPHY

Take a gander at the following list and it'll be immediately apparent just how busy the Midlands-based bods have been over the last ten years.

You'll note also that there's the odd game or two in this list on Sega formats. Well Sega fans are never likely to see a Rare game again, thanks to the partnership formed between Rare and Nintendo earlier this year. Aah, what a shame.

ZITZ, RASH AND PIMPLE

Rare's most notable offering to the world of the SNES owner before the inimitable *Donkey Kong Country* was *Battletoads In Battlemaniacs*. The super-charged toad characters were blatantly ripped off from the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, of course, but the game proved a surprisingly enjoyable affair, good enough, in fact, to earn it an 80% rating from ex-*Super Play* Editor Matt Bielby.

Kicking off as a scrolling beat-'em-up, the game soon reveals itself to be something more: level two offers a vertically scrolling dodging/punching challenge, three is a jetbike bit, while the platform-led action of level four represents what is arguably the best part of the game.

You may have difficulty picking a copy up nowadays, but Rare afficianados could do a lot worse than to hunt it down to witness early evidence of numerous clever touches that have been expanded upon in fine style since with the likes of *Killer Instinct* and *Diddy's Kong Quest*.

It's a hoot-worthy game, though. See?

their own original work, and development deals began to turn up left, right and centre. Their experience with the format also ensured a number of coin-op conversions came knocking on their door – notably Williams' *NARC* and Atari's *Marble Madness* – and the company's size and stature continued to grow apace.

As far as original software went, Rare's output was a mixed bag – some, like *Snake Rattle And Roll*, proving highly enjoyable and original; others little more than average; all, it was generally agreed, lacking the spark that'd appeared in their best computer work. *Wizards And Warriors* and *RC Pro-Am*, two high profile hits in Japan and the States, gained little recognition in this country, chiefly because Nintendo's first attempt at a console was floundering in the face of competition from Sega with their similarly-specced Master System unit.

So, while they enjoyed a strong reputation elsewhere across the globe, most UK gamers neither knew nor really cared about what was going on behind the redbrick walls of Rare's headquarters. A situation that was to change, of course...

Knight Lore is arguably the best-known Ultimate game. The reason? Its isometric 3D presentation.

Graphical Excesses

After aircraft-manufacturing giants Boeing and *Toy Story* creators Industrial Light & Magic, Rare have the largest amount of Silicon Graphics equipment in the world. Inside their HQ, SGI workstations are everywhere, and it's the close bond between their talented staff and hundreds of thousand pounds' worth of kit (some of the heftier machines even have their own pet names given to them by their operators, apparently) that has brought the company so much attention since June 1994.

That date, the time of the Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago, marked what remains a masterstroke of a marketing move: the coining of the acronym ACM – Advanced Computer Modelling – to refer to the graphics process developed for *Donkey Kong Country*. The term is pretty meaningless in actuality, but it soon became the hot topic on SNES owners' lips, referred to with levels of excitement

As Ultimate Play The Game:

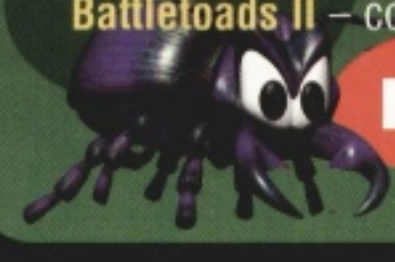
Tranz-Am – Spectrum
Pssst! – Spectrum
Cookie – Spectrum
Jet-Pac – Spectrum
Lunar Jet Man – Spectrum
Atic-Atac – Spectrum

Knight Lore – Spectrum
Underwurlde – Spectrum
Sabre Wulf – Spectrum
Alien 8 – Spectrum
Cyberun – Spectrum
Gunfright – Spectrum

Nightshade – Spectrum
Bubbler – Spectrum
Martianoids – Spectrum
Pentagram – Spectrum
Entombed – C64
Staff Of Karnath – C64
Imotep – C64
Black Wyche – C64
Outlaws – C64

As Rare:

Aniticipation – NES
Arch Rivals – NES
Battletoads – NES
Battletoads – Game Boy
Battletoads – Game Gear
Battletoads – Mega Drive
Battletoads in Battlemaniacs – SNES
Battletoads II – coin-op



K SINCLAIR ZX SPECTRUM

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(P&P included) Tel: 0530 411485

The mystique that surrounded Ultimate in the '80s undoubtedly accounted for a large part of their software's reputation. Press adverts for Ultimate games couldn't be more different than the equivalents Nintendo put out to promote Rare's products today, with screenshots, sales blurb and even a description to tell you what the game was about all conspicuous by their absence – factors which made the games even more eagerly anticipated.

While this may have seemed like a self-conscious marketing plan, Rare's Simon Farmer theorises otherwise: "I think it's just the way the Stamper brothers have always worked. Originally they were creating games with a small dedicated group of people and consequently had very little time for any kind of PR-related activity."

And what of Rare's secretive façade today? Could this not be seen as a direct carry-over from the attitude of Ultimate? "Put it this way: we'd much rather spend time concentrating on creating better games and leave the promoting to the publisher, which happens to be Nintendo at the moment. To be honest, though, I reckon there's been significantly more information and interviews about this company in the last two years than there's been in the eight years prior to this..."

The two Sabre Wulfs: Speccy game (above) and *KI* character (right)

Battletoads/Double Dragon is Rare's weakest SNES effort, having been awarded 37% in *Super Play* #16.

normally reserved for hardware-based innovations such as Argonaut's Super FX chip. In truth, any developer could have hit on the formula – indeed, it's been copied on enough occasions since, with spot ACM-style effects turning up in games ranging from *Yoshi's Island* to Konami's *Goemon 4* – but Rare got there first and, most importantly, ensured that there was also a solid and playable game in place to back up the technique.

With ACM, Rare and Nintendo changed the face of 16-bit videogaming in an instant, and there was undoubtedly no small amount of glass raising and toastage in their respective boardrooms as *Donkey Kong Country* went on to sell an incredible eight million units worldwide.

The Marriage

On April 18 this year, Rare succumbed to the temptation of Nintendo's gargantuan wallet, with the Japanese giant buying a quarter share of the company. Cash-wise, Nintendo would disclose only that it had made a "major multi-million dollar capital investment" in Rare, and the final sum that changed hands remains a secret to this day.

It was the first time that the big N had invested in a company outside of Japan, and the story brought national attention to the brothers Stamper, with tabloids and broadsheets alike running typical 'Whiz Kid *Space Invader* Creators Make Piles Of Dosh!' stories. At the time, Nintendo Vice President Howard Lincoln referred to Rare as "the Spielberg of videogame development", and promptly baggsied himself a chair in their boardroom where he would take up a role as one of four Directors – the others being Stampers One and Two and Joel Hochberg (who heads Rare Coin-It Toys & Games, a subdivision of Rare).

SNES *KI*. Technically amazing and playable with it.

But Rare didn't use Nintendo's fists-full of yen to go out and buy spanky new sports cars or other such luxuries. Nope, although there's no doubt the head honchos have little trouble getting a round in down the pub when it's their shout, to them, cash equals developmental support, and without plenty of that you're not in with a chance nowadays.

"Game production has now become so

COMMODORE 64

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Ultimate's campaigns set out being mysterious (above), but eventually became more commercial (right).

Looking back to those famed Ultimate titles, many gamers who've stuck with the hobby over the years would love to see them revived for the '90s. Most were solid games at heart, and it'd be easy to do what Activision with with *Pitfall: The Mayan Adventure*. "Yeah, the old games always seem so good now, and that's because often they were the first examples of that particular genre of game during that time, so they were completely new and exciting," believes Farmer. "I recently played *Jet-Pac* and *Pssst!* and was quite surprised to find them still playable now, although at the end of the day I still think that these games are better left as they were. I don't see anything wrong with rejuvenating characters from old games but to update and redo a game directly looks like you're lacking in ideas."

So what about our old friend Sabreman, star of loads of great Ultimate games? Surely he could become as big a star as Mario? "Oh he's gone to the great Videogame Heroes Museum in the sky," he says with a chuckle.

expensive with the computers and software involved in development that financially it's become very dificult to provide large development teams with the necessary kit," claims Simon Farmer, Rare's Production Manager. "Consequently – as a lot of small developers have discovered – outside funding has to be sought nowadays to ensure that games look, sound and play as well as they possibly can, so that they can compete on the same terms of those of many of the larger publishers."

Nintendo maintain a hawk-like watch over Twycross' most famous exporters – tweaking bits here, insisting on a changes or two there – but the reality is somewhat different, according to Farmer. "They obviously like to see the games as often as possible," he reveals. "But they normally only see the products at the end of their development and then make their comments. For the majority of the time Nintendo have the confidence in us to get on with the job."

But what about measuring up to Nintendo's notoriously high standards? Do Rare's designers not feel any pressure come up with a game to beat *Yoshi's Island*, for example? "We're extremely comfortable working with Nintendo and I know that they appreciate our work as much as we respect theirs. We feel that our games measure up to Nintendo's very well indeed, and there's at least eight million *DKC* fans out there that would agree with us."

With *Killer Instinct*, many claimed that Rare had simply ripped off themes that were popular in various other games at the time – notably the importance it places on combo attacks and various moves that are near carbon copies of those in other examples.

Do they feel this is an unfair allegation? "We're influenced by

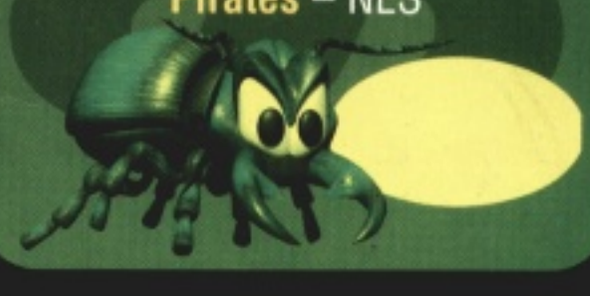
The Honeymoon

With Rare responsible for coming up with three of Nintendo's biggest SNES releases ever in *DKC*, *KI* and *DKQ*, you might well envisage a scenario where

Rare's SGI visuals are squeezed down to form less impressive, but nevertheless effective. SNES images.

Battlemaniacs – SNES
Battlemaniacs – Game Boy
Battlemaniacs – Mega Drive
Battletoads II (Ragnarok's World) – Game Boy

Battletoads/Double Dragon – Game Boy
Battletoads/Double Dragon – NES
Battletoads/Double Dragon – Mega Drive
Battletoads/Double Dragon – SNES
Beetlejuice – Game Boy
Beetlejuice – NES
Cabal – NES
California Games – NES
Capt. Skyhawk – NES
Cobra Triangle – NES
Donkey Kong Country – SNES
Diddy's Kong Quest – SNES
Digger – NES
Double Dare – NES
Gloveball – NES
Highspeed – NES
Hollywood Squares – NES
Indy Heat – NES
Ironsword (Wizards And Warriors II) – NES
Jeopardy – NES
Jeopardy Jr. – NES
Jeopardy 25th – NES
Killer Instinct – Game Boy
Killer Instinct – SNES
Killer Instinct – coin-op
Marble Madness – NES
Monster Max – Game Boy
NARC – NES
Nightmare – NES
One On One – NES
Pinbot – NES
Pirates – NES



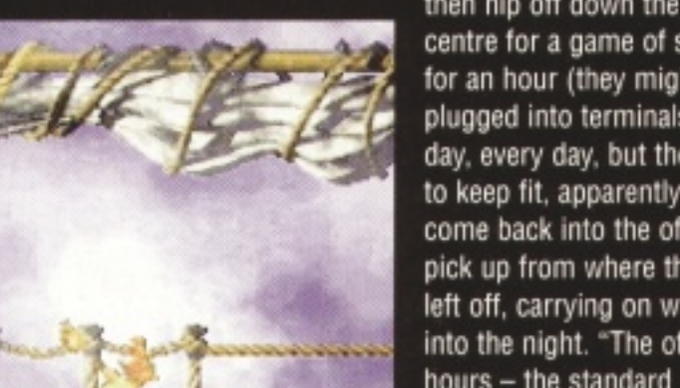
RARE GO ULTRA

Giant scorpion-type machines of destruction await in *Blastdozer*. Cripes.

Of the 13 games shown at Shoshinkai, two of them hailed from Rare – *Blastdozer* and *GoldenEye*. Unsurprisingly, both were only available in a rolling video format, though, so we asked Rare's Simon Farmer to tell us what they're all about, starting with the more attractive-looking of the two:

"The original *Blastdozer* concept came from an idea that had been floating around for some time. Chris Stamper along with some of our other designers had been looking into the possibility of creating a game based around the destruction of buildings using diggers and other demolition tools. Blowing up and demolishing buildings using massive, powerful demolition equipment on a huge scale is a very entertaining concept, and provided an excellent base for a game centred around the absolute destruction of huge tower blocks and other buildings you see around you every day. Lots of people owned toy dumper trucks or diggers as children and they're familiar with how they work, so this provides an ideal basis for the game.

"The story for the game provides the excuse for all this mass-scale destruction. Essentially what's happened is that a malfunction on a truck carrying a nuclear payload/reactor leaves it running out of control and heading straight towards civilisation. Taking part in the game as a demoliton company you have to clear a path through cities and environments while scientists and technicians work to bring the reactor and truck under control."



These super-realistic explosions are made easy thanks to Alias' Ultra 64 development software. Coo.

Cash prizes are on offer for knocking over buildings! We can't wait to get our mitts on this little monster.

Rare's attempt to bring *GoldenEye* from silver screen to console, meanwhile, looks reminscent of Sega's *Virtua Cop*...

"Many people have also claimed that it looks like *Doom* but I consider both to be unfair assessments of the game – no-

many outside factors besides other people's software," notes Farmer. "But obviously we look at other people's games – most people here still have an intense passion for videogames so they play as many other products as they possibly can. Japanese software is influential as we consider their games to be consistently very well designed – they appear to be able to appeal to all cultures with their games, which is something we strive to achieve with all of our games as well. At the end of the day we don't look too hard at what the rest of the industry is doing – instead we try to concentrate our efforts on producing what we ourselves would like to play."

The race for your money is on: will you choose *Yoshi's Island* now that it's out in the UK, or *Diddy's Kong Quest*? Zy's review over the page should help.

There's no doubt that Nintendo are chuffed with what's been produced so far, so Rare *must* be getting their part of the bargain right.

The secret of their continued success isn't as easy to pinpoint as you might think. But one thing *is* certain: expensive SGI rendering workstations might be handy things to have around, but there's no substitute for human talent and dedication – and yer average Rare staff member is absolutely dedicated to his or her craft. It's not uncommon for employees to grind away on their part of the project all day, then nip off down the sports centre for a game of squash for an hour (they might be plugged into terminals all day, every day, but they like to keep fit, apparently) then come back into the office to pick up from where they left off, carrying on well into the night. "The office hours – the standard working times at Rare – are 9 to 5, five days a week," reveals Farmer. "But if we were to work strictly to these times it'd be virtually impossible to produce a good quality game with the kind of deadlines we have to meet, so many of the development staff work well beyond these hours – not because someone tells them to, but because they want to see their game and team succeed. Most people enjoy what they're doing here so they put that extra effort and time into our products."

Yes, it's pretty clear that putting together some of the world's best videogames must be quite an enjoyable way to earn a crust...

Raring To Go

As we enter what promises to be the most exciting year ever in videogaming, Rare find themselves in an enviable position. They're top chums with the world's biggest videogames company, they have a bit of dosh in the bank, they've created the world's fastest-selling videogame (SNES *Killer Instinct*), and they have everything in place for a storming software performance on the Ultra 64. So, where next for Donkey Kong's adopted parents? After taking a relative back seat to publishers like Nintendo up until now, they have clear publishing intentions of their own, with the Rareware label: "It's very important to bring out the Rare identity and the publishing division," says Farmer, "That way we can help to ensure the growth and continued success of the company as a whole".

Let's build ourselves a comfy little fantasy scenario for a moment: It's ten years down the line, gamers have just heard that the Ultra 64 is about to

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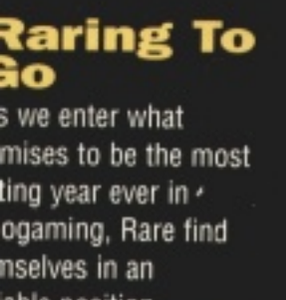

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The level of *GE* shown so far is a first-person viewed shooty affair, but there should be more styles later…

one's played it and it's only been previewed for a few seconds on video. Obviously people instantly see its first-person perspective and its polygonal characters and immediately think *Virtua Cop*, and that's a shame because I think that when the game's close to completion they'll be able to see a lot more depth to this title than either of those other two games.

"The Ultra 64 game naturally rotates around the film *GoldenEye* to a certain degree, but we've taken aspects we thought the film was lacking in and used artistic license to improve on those areas. I think you'll have to wait and see the game closer to completion before you judge it."

On a broader scale, how do Rare see the Ultra 64 affecting videogames in general?

"I think for a long time many developers have been restricted with the types of games that can be produced by the capabilities of the hardware they've been working on," says Farmer. "But with the release of the Ultra 64 a completely new world of gaming is right there to be explored, and our designers have every intention of taking full advantage of the machine's potential, to produce some of the most exciting games you've ever seen – at home or in the arcade."

And what about the biggest strength of Nintendo's new machine – is it the console's texture-mapping that impresses most, or something else?

"Actually I think the Ultra's biggest strength lies in the architecture of the whole system. Here you have a videogames company – Nintendo – that's responsible for some of the most impressive and innovative games and games consoles in history, coupled with a company – Silicon Graphics – responsible for designing some of the most technically advanced processors and hardware around, which also happens to own a software company – Alias – responsible for some of the most amazing visuals and effects you'll see in films and games at the moment. Mix all these ingredients together and you have one of the most

The prospect of a fully texture-mapped Pierce Brosnan on the Ultra 64 already has Alison smiling…

potent cocktails around – or one of the most powerful games machines on the market."

The Ultra 64 has already been lumped with the unfortunate tag of 'PlayStation Plus' from some of its more harsh critics. Farmer, however, is fairly dismissive of any comparisons between formats: "Each machine has its own strengths and weaknesses, but at the end of the day it's all going to come down to the games and which system has the most original, diverse and best examples of different genres. At the same time, of course, creating completely new and original products."

With all this talk of the Ultra 64 and the future of gaming, we appear to have forgotten about our little grey friend, who's stood solidly by us through thick and thin. What's next from Rare on 16-bit?

"You'll just have to wait and see how much more we can squeeze out of the SNES. One thing's for certain – the best is yet to come!"

enjoyable way to
earn a crust…

Raring To Go

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ears down the line,
Ultra 64 is about to
enter its third incarnation and videogaming has crossed even further into the entertainment mainstream. Where are Rare and what are they doing? "We'd hope that Rare would have become the world's leader in producing entertainment titles – not just in games, but in films and other formats. We'd like to provide an exciting future for the UK's creative young people of tomorrow," Farmer surmises, ambitiously. "We'd certainly like to think that sometime in the future we'd be comparable to Nintendo."

An interesting prospect, and not an altogether unreasonable one. It's certainly inconceivable that Rare could be going anywhere other than from strength to strength in the near future.

Pondering over what Rare's company slogan would be if they had one, Farmer reveals the lighter side of the company: "Well, there are numerous phrases bandied about here but unfortunately they're all unprintable, so it'll have to be something short and sweet like "Play Hard".

Well, you keep making 'em and we promise to keep playing 'em. Hard.

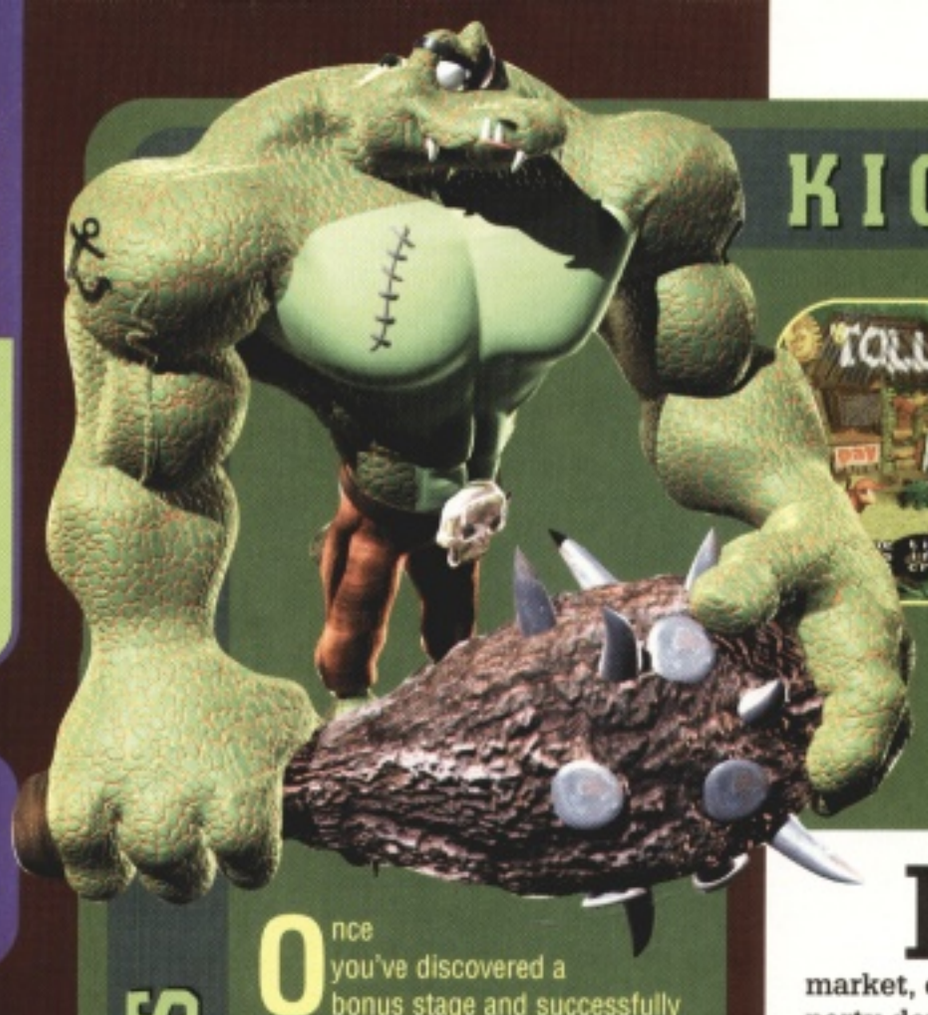
STOP PRESS

Just as we were finishing this issue, news came into the office regarding Nintendo's so-called Bulky Drive for the Ultra 64, which is due to appear in Nov '96. Apparently it's now dubbed the 64DD (blimey missus, etc.), and has a capacity of 512 megabits (64 megabytes) per game. Transfer speed is said to be more than three times that of a CD drive, at one megabyte per second, but Nintendo have yet to confirm the exact specs. We'll have full details next month…

Pro Am – Game Boy
Pro Am – NES

Pro Am II – NES
Pro Am (Championship) – Master System
Quarterback – NES
Roger Rabbit – NES
Sesame Set 123 – NES
Sesame St ABC – NES
Sesame St Comp – NES
Silent Service – NES
Silversword (Wizards And Warriors III) – NES
Slalom – NES
Snake Rattle 'n' Roll – NES
Snake Rattle 'n' Roll – Mega Drive
Sneaky Snakes – Game Boy
Solar Jetman – NES
Spiderman – Game Boy
Super Off Road – NES
Taboo – NES
Time Lord – NES
Wheel Of Fortune – SNES
Wheel Of Fortune Jr. – NES
Wheel Of Fortune Family Edition – NES
Wizards And Warriors – NES

Wizards And Warriors:
Fortress – Game Boy
World Games – NES
Wrestlemania – NES
WWFII Survivor Series – NES
WWF Superstars – Game Boy
X The Ball – coin-op



KIOSK

This bloke has been drybrushed. as *White Dwarf* will tell you.

Rotating cannon barrels with 1-second fuses, barrels moved with the D-pad – clever stuff.

The Kremling's Lost World (below) is packed with evil gits who can steal your lives.

KLUBBA'S

Once you've discovered a bonus stage and successfully completed it, you'll be awarded a Kremling doubloon: save 15 of these and you can pay off Klubba, the Kremling gatekeeper of the game's eighth world. Each of his golden barrels take you to a stage of the Lost World, a secret place at the heart of Crocodile Isle. You won't see the game's special ending until you've completed all of the stages here, and sure enough the difficulty grade takes a leap skyward to make you work for it.

***Donkey Kong Country*. The all-time best-selling game that revitalised the 16-bit market, caused controversy among third party developers and placed a little-known company called Rare Design at the vanguard of Nintendo's next generation army. A goddamn classic, the suits will tell you, citing the huge pile of cash it made as proof of its quality.**

It was also a bog-standard outing in a tired run-and-jump genre with incredible graphics as its saving grace, and I didn't much care for it. When taking screenshots of *Diddy's Kong Quest* in the *SPlay* office, several game journos asked me what I thought of it and openly admitted that they'd never liked the original either. Not just me, then?

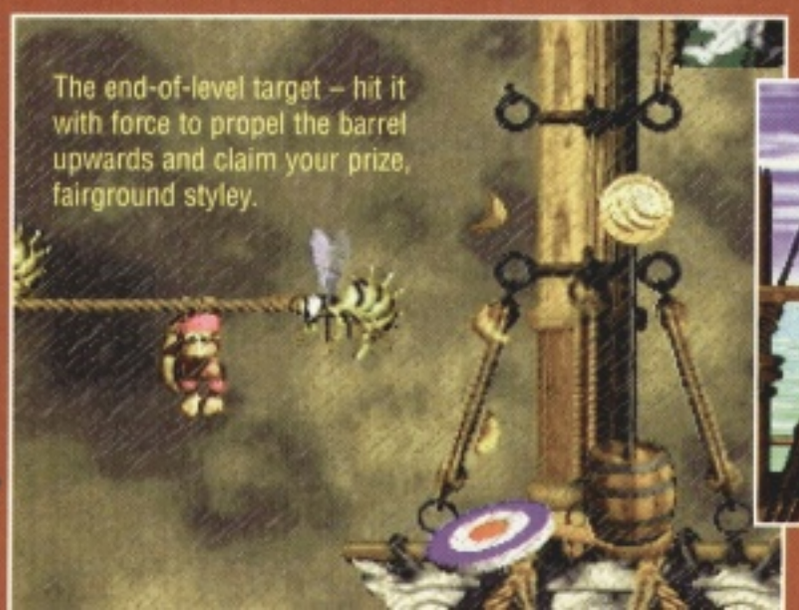
So here's the surprise. With 14 hours on the clock of my saved game (yeah, so it sounds a bit rubbish, I know, but I was employing

Oh, calm down.

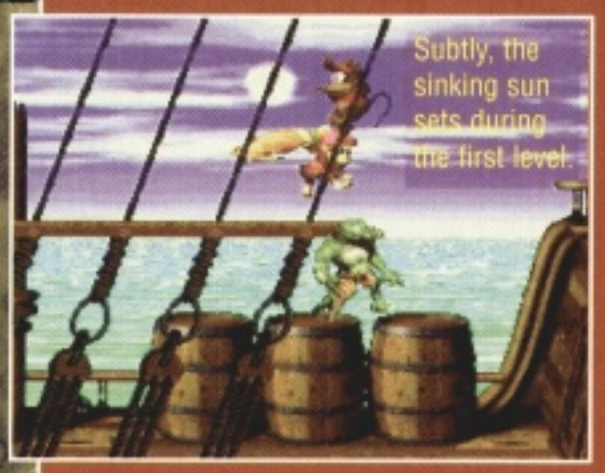
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2

DIDDY'S KONG QUEST

In view of Dixie's debut, isn't that a salacious subtitle?



The end-of-level target – hit it with force to propel the barrel upwards and claim your prize, fairground styley.



Subtly, the sinking sun sets during the first level.

UK Release

Game: Donkey Kong Country 2 – Diddy's Kong Quest
Publisher: Nintendo
Developer: Rare
Price: £54.99
Release: January '96
Players: 1 or 2
Cart ROM: 32 Mbit & BB

Special Reviewing Techniques™) I can honestly say that I've thoroughly enjoyed *DKQ*, albeit another platform game with the same rendered graphics.

Superficially at least, it appears to be little more than a rehash of *DKC*. But once you start playing, you begin to notice the differences. There's more to do, it's slightly more forgiving, more controllable, and even the bonus sections require some small effort – a relief after the tedium of *DKC*'s token-collecting atrocities. Nothing breathtaking or ooh-worthy, I'll grant you, but more involving and rewarding than I'd expected.

I suppose we're all bound to be a bit blasé about this rendered graphics nonsense too, after a year of seeing it in every games magazine on the shelf, but look at the lighting effects in Ghostly Glade or the rainy grey skies in the rigging of the Gangplank Galleon and there's still a sense of wonder at seeing your 16-bit SNES outperforming some of the offerings on next-gen machines. Collision detection is a little haphazard because of the intricacy of those graphics: your sprite can sometimes safely overlap part of a danger zone like a thorny bramble, but must steer clear in other places.

And because the animation is so fluid, it's difficult to tell when your spin attack starts and stops being considered effective. As the Mottster has pointed out in the past, you can't perform the precision stunts of a *Mario* game when the graphics are so organic and imprecise.

A few shoddy patches in the design don't help either. For example, in one level you start at the centre of a honeycombed hive and must explore in all directions by climbing walls of sticky honey or parascending on Dixie's hair to find the exit. Unfortunately, falling through the bottom of the hive means instant death. And there's absolutely nothing to distinguish the bottom of the hive from the top. This kind of carelessness in a game style that's been imitated a thousand times simply shouldn't happen any more. Ever.

Above all, my problem with *DKQ* is that it doesn't feel finished.

This is Gangplank Galleon map. The DK means I've done everything here.

Wait till you see the ghost boss of this level. Incredible.

Crocodile Cauldron's levels are naturally full of caves, lava and top molten rock action.

The Kremling Funfair. You can probably just make out Rare plugging another of their little-known games.

Barrel Bayou contains some excellent sneaky loops for accumulating lives and money fast.

Kremland is a place of wasps and honey, including one enormous hive mother to defeat. Gnarly.

ling's Lost World
packed with evil
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Some backgrounds look ropey and dull, and your inactive ape partner will occasionally behave glitchily (standing in the air, spinning endlessly on a ledge, etc). The game actually froze up on me for five seconds when I ran into a bad guy clutching a *DK* barrel. The music is also a disappointment, at its best when it reprises old themes from *DKC*. Although the rumours suggest otherwise, I'm left with the distinct impression that *DKQ* was completed in a hurry and hasn't been as finely-tuned as it should.

Longevity is another issue that might concern last year's *DKC* buyers, and although they've put more effort into making *DKQ* a lasting affair I'm still suspicious about the replay value. Getting a 100% rating and special ending requires you to scour the completed levels over and over again to find all the obscure bonus sections, so a second playing is unlikely to hold many surprises.

Rare can boast some clever people when it comes to exploiting hardware or devising new software routines that would never have occurred to a hundred established developers familiar with the SNES. But on the strength of their *Donkey Kong* games and *Killer Instinct*, they haven't demonstrated the sort of experience and originality in actual game design that their reputation suggests they ought to. They're extremely competent in that department, granted: but as I hope the difference between *DKC* and its sequel shows, they're still learning. And that's not altogether bad news. They've listened to criticism after a success that might've made other companies complacent, and it gives me more confidence in their forthcoming Ultra 64 contributions.

As for *Diddy's Kong Quest*, I'd recommend it. Sure, Yoshi could still eat the entire Kong Family for breakfast if they ever dared step foot on his Island, and you've probably got lots of equally good platformers already. But, erm, here's another one. With rendered sprites.

● **Zy Nicholson**

A bird-eating spider? That's ruined the myth of a *Farthing Wood* sylvan co-operative.

Balloons lose height unless they're over a geothermal vent. Cue some tricky manoeuvres and desperate dashes for the next uplift.

DON'T FANCY YOURS MUCH

The new joy of *DKQ* is that the two protagonists have considerably different abilities. Should you take a steep running jump with Diddy, or a short jump and long glide with Dixie? Hold the shielding barrel over your head with Dixie, or in front of you with Diddy? Combine the two and you can throw your partner as a weapon, or to reach those out-of-reach coins, bananas, barrels and hooks – and even then, Diddy has a straight cannon throw while Dixie takes a more ballistic lob. Decisions, decisions, decisions.

Old Cranky Kong is once again on hand with derogatory and vaguely amusing comments about the game itself. As a reviewer I wonder if it's a self-conscious attempt to disarm potential criticism, but perhaps it's just a joke about people like me...

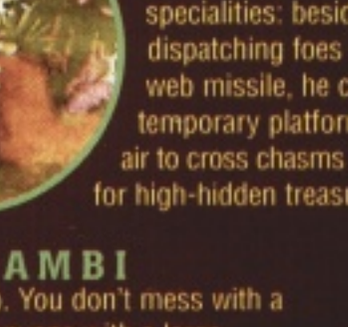
$3=
$2=
He's right, you know. And look at all that Nintendo gear.
I don't even get two screens to stand on! I'm sure K. Rool will have two, so why can't I? Pah!

DOO LITTLE, TOO LATE?

Welcome to a world of anthropomorphism run riot. If the Kongs aren't riding one of their animal chums, they're jumping into special barrels and turning into them. It's this new line-up of fauna, each with different abilities and playing styles, that makes *DKQ* a more varied experience than its predecessor. Everything *DKC* should have been, in fact...

SQUAWKS

Gosh, how *do* they come up with these names? A more interesting sidekick nevertheless, as Squawks can now carry the Kongs aloft using the old *Joust* mechanic of rapidly hitting the button to gain height, and his egg-coughing projectile attack takes a bit of practice to aim and fire while you're doing it.



RATTLY

A snake, of course, and a right gormless-looking snake at that. He coils, he jumps, he works like a pogo stick. You can also charge up his spring for a super-high jump, with obvious potential for exploring and monster-squashage.

SQUITTER

He's got an unfortunate name in our vernacular, but the spider chum has two specialities: besides dispatching foes with a web missile, he can weave temporary platforms in the air to cross chasms or explore for high-hidden treasure.

RAMBI

He's a rhino. You don't mess with a rhino. Ask anyone with a large ivory tusk embedded in their skull. A few speedy shortcuts exist if you use his charge attack to bounce off monsters.

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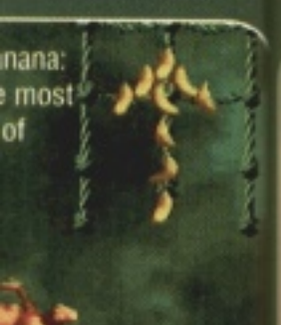


ENGUARDE

No surprises here, although we took perverse glee in using his charged attack to beach him on dry land. Did somebody say chips and batter? Heh, heh, heh. (*What's that? – Ed*)

GLIMMER

The Angler Fish accompanies you in deep dark places, illuminating a headlamp-beam-shaped portion of the screen ahead with his handy biophosphorescent appendage. And let's face it, we could all use one of those in certain situations, right?

CLAPPER

Jump on the seal's back and he'll cough up ice cubes, temporarily cooling lava to water (? Er...) or freezing it into a slippy-slidey platform. This is not the kind of seal treatment endorsed by Terry Nutkins and his pals, we suspect.

A great impression of Tony on a Monday morning, this.

KREM DE LA KREM

Here's the clincher. I hate auto-scrolling 'runaway mine-cart' levels with a passion, and yet one of my favourite stages, Rickety Race, is exactly that – a dodgy rollercoaster race handled with enough speed to be thrilling and just enough warning to let your reflexes work when memory fails. I returned to it plenty of times to see if I could beat the nine Kremling opponents again (doing so earns you a big DK coin, the secret goal of every level).

That ghost will be deadly tangible in 08 seconds, see.

Rickety Race (r): we'll bump him off on the slope.

Fly, Dixie! Fly like a bonkers ape girl in a wheeled skull!

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY 2

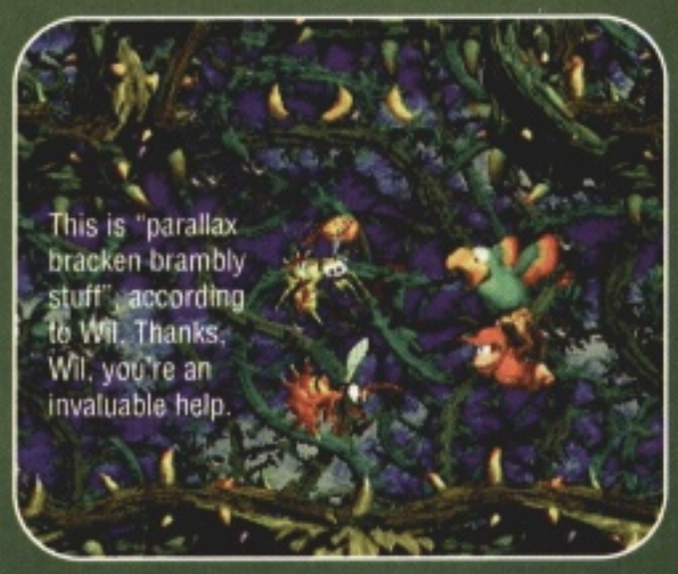
DIDDY'S KONG QUEST

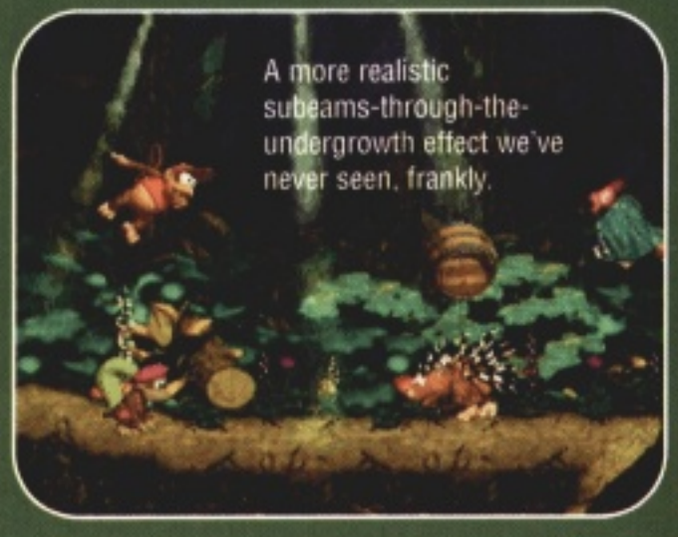
Nintendo

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
90%	82%	80%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	82%
70%		

VERDICT: A better game than *DKC*, rougher at the edges, but with a little more depth of gameplay and fewer pointless frills. A fact that surprises me as much as you, I'm sure.

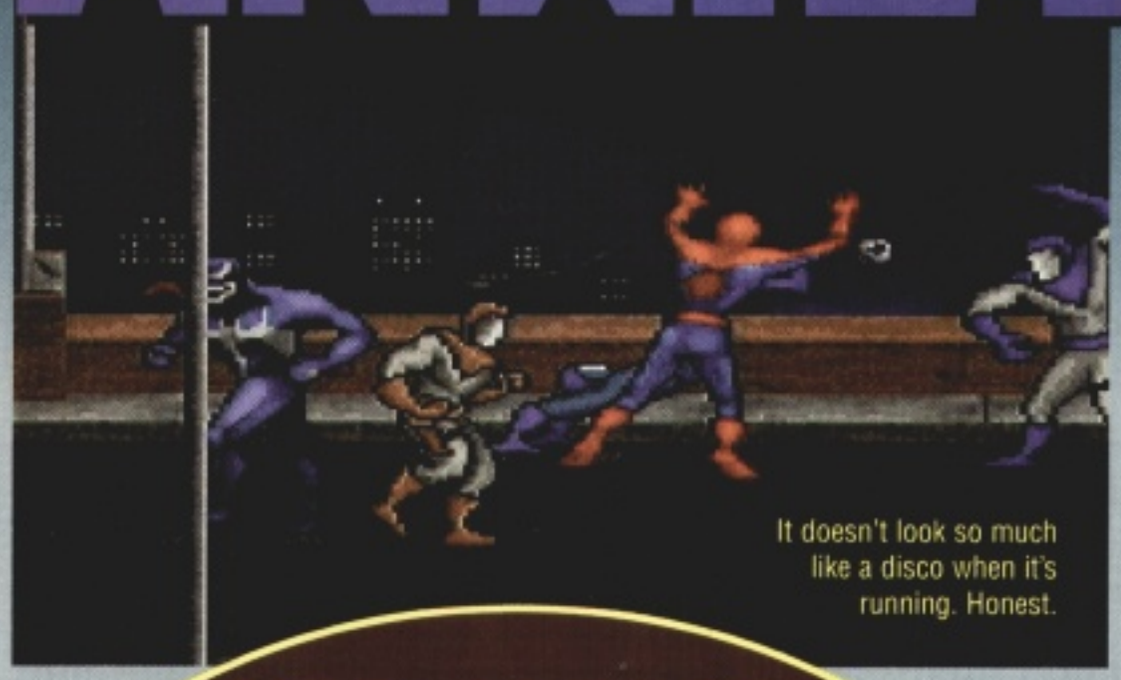
We could fill a whole mag with gert lush screenshots of *DKQ*, but (a) that would be ultimately dull and (b) it would ruin half the appeal of the game – seeing what's next. So here's a paltry few.





Venom • Spiderman
SEPARATION ANXIETY

Is it Spidey or Venom suffering some deep psychological trauma? Or the programmers? Or us? Someone certainly is.



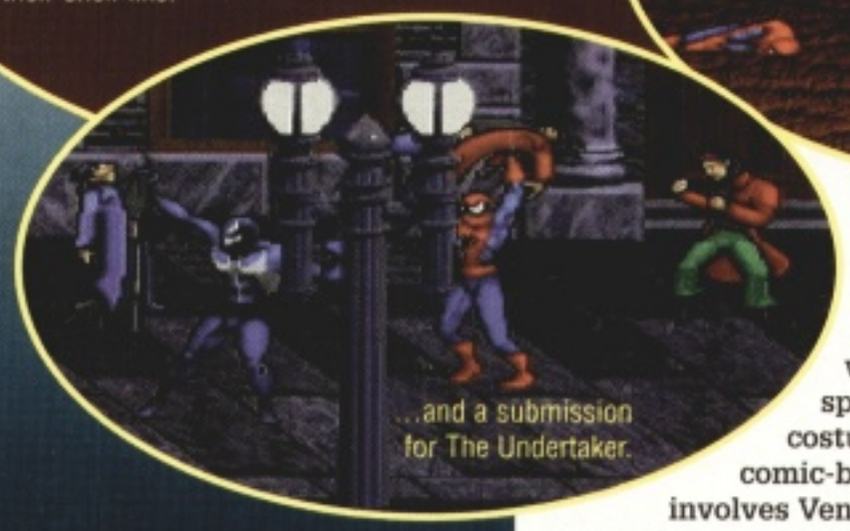
It doesn't look so much like a disco when it's running. Honest.

Each level is punctuated with a boss who has little to do with the story but has predictable patterns of attack.

TWO-PLAYER WRESTLEMANIA

Those tight suits give it away. The real reason that the anxious couple have got together is that they're forming a wrestling tag team with the aim of appearing in a new WWF-licensed game. Coincidentally, Acclaim publish the Lycra Lads' in-ring grunting and grinding SNES antics, so perhaps someone should have a word in their shell-like.

A fall for Spidey...



...and a submission for The Undertaker.

The anxiety of the title is the pain that Venom feels when he's violently split from his living costume. A true-to-the-comic-books storyline involves Venom's quest to take the away the new-found life from the Symbiotes which have grown from it (which in turn grew from Spidey's suit and sapped his energy, in an "And Adam begat Eve" kinda way). They're on the lose and may go to The Dark Side, so the old adversaries become pals and work towards a mutual goal... by smacking people in.

This scrolling, strolling beat-'em-up pantomime is played out in a 3D-ish environment, where your character can not only walk side to side and from back to foreground but you can also climb up walls. Disappointing, though hardly surprising, are the very flat character sprites and game furniture. The gameplay's also two-dimensional, in that you can only fight along a flat horizontal plane, so if you're on a different level than an opponent your punches won't connect. It's the nature of the scrolling beat-'em-up beast, of course, but its appearance serves to illustrate just how little the game style has developed in recent years.

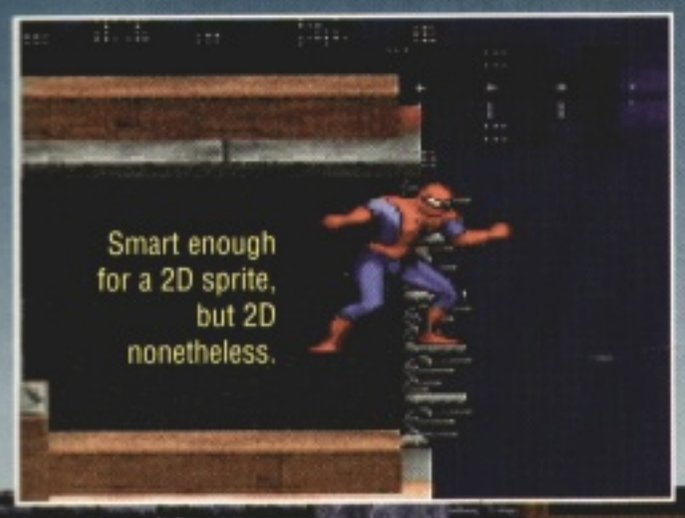
The game's divided into five major levels set in and around the streets of Manhattan and are a progression through

Two-player mode is where the fun gets going. The arch enemies fend off robotic foes.

Only when you've defeated all the baddies in a section can you move on. Even then it's only to the next fixed screen.

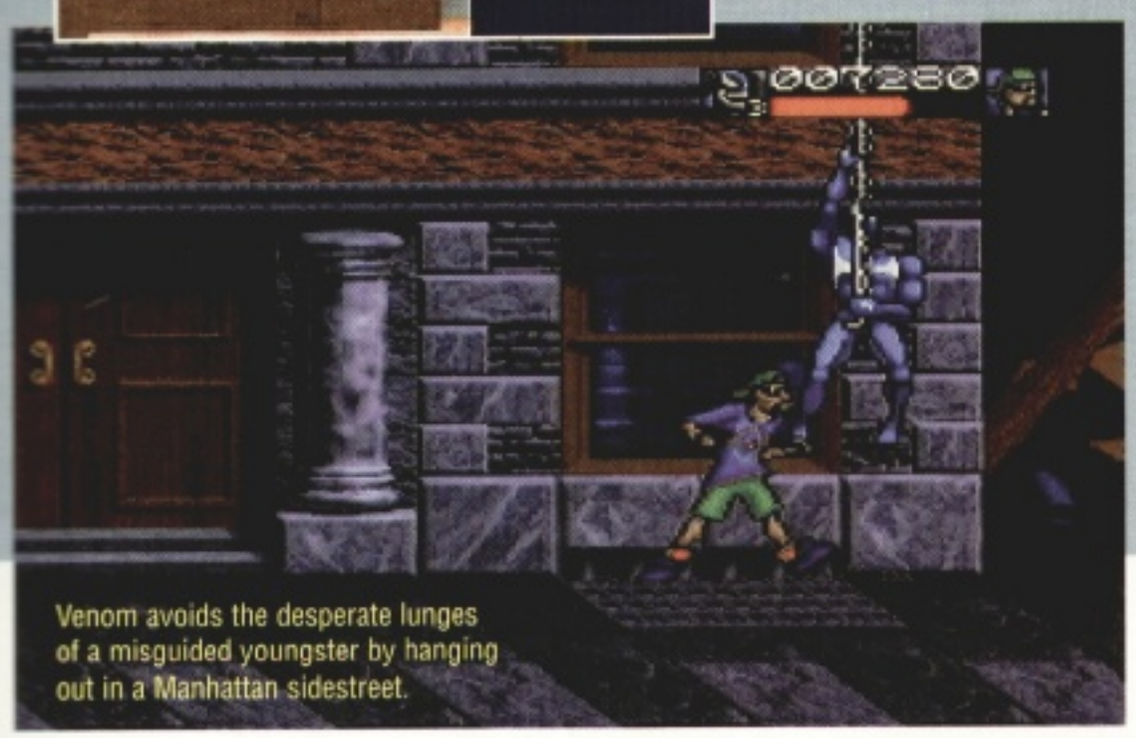
UK Release

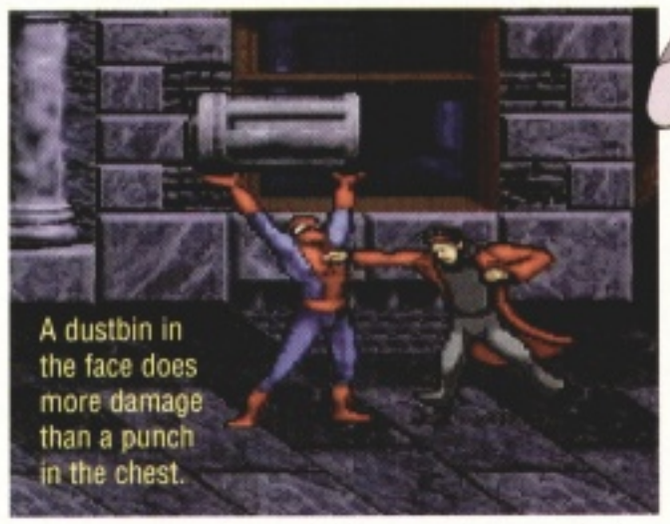
Game: Separation Anxiety
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Software Creations
Price: Shop around
Release: Out now
Players: 1 or 2 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit


Smart enough for a 2D sprite, but 2D nonetheless.

Swing, Spidey, swing like a superhero on a rope.

Keep an eye out for added extras like secret rooms. One's very near the start.


Venom avoids the desperate lunges of a misguided youngster by hanging out in a Manhattan sidestreet.


A dustbin in the face does more damage than a punch in the chest.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

Acclaim

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
60%	70%	65%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
40%		58%

VERDICT: A plodding, directionless scrolling beat-'em-up that's fun in two-player mode, but ultimately does Spidey – or SNES owners – few favours.

fixed-screen blocks with patterns of incoming baddies ready to do you in, or at least sap your energy to ensure that the upcoming bosses make light work of dispatching you. Start each level by moving to your right – walk, jump or if, like me, you're a flash git, swing on your sticky web rope – but then you find yourself stuck in a fixed screen which you can't leave until you've beaten up whatever enemies come along.

The lack of control over your progress is the single most irritating thing ever introduced to video games, and standing waiting for someone to turn up so that you can punch them is unforgivable. No-one should have to pay for the privilege of watching a Spidey sprite moping around waiting for some action to happen.

Having said that, when the action does kick off it's fun, fairly fast and just about varied enough to keep your interest. The two-player mode's best as Spidey and Venom work together, and this is where the better moves like throws and webby lassoes work best. Thankfully there's no discernable slowdown even when six or so good-sized sprites are jumping and punching and clutching their broken jaws.

Initially *Separation Anxiety* looks and feels like a very dull affair, with a few identical enemies plodding towards you, and your character punching them in the head three or five times before they lie down, flicker then disappear. But as you get further in, the baddies become more varied in appearance, ability and types of attack. And if you experiment with buttons you'll find yourself hoisting people (and robots and Symbiotes) above your heads and throwing them down in a heap, or flashing out a length of web and reeling 'em in to deliver a high speed smack (Venom's equivalent of this move is a super-extending blue arm which gets the same result). Then you'll learn to climb walls to collect health power-ups, create a web-shield to repel attacks, pick up objects to use as missiles, search for secret rooms and fathom out bosses' patterns.

It's reasonably good fun in a brainless way, but eventually becomes very repetitive, and the feeling of being continually at the game's mercy grinds you down. A good execution of an uninspired game theme.

● **Josse Bilson**

If baddies keep their distance, send out a webby rope and reel 'em in. Then punch 'em.

"The night is ripe for evil," brooded Spawn as a helicopter bathed him in the searing beam of its searchlight. "This evening I shall kick some serious villain arse!". Well it worked for me.

UK Release

Game: Spawn: The Video Game
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Ukiyotei
Price: Shop around
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

Spawn frightens a nearby Childline counsellor.

I've never actually read a *Spawn* comic. Maybe it's because I was raised on a solid diet of vintage John Byrne *X-Men* and *Micronauts* by Golden that I've never really developed a liking for the new breed of superhero. For all their computer coloured, limited edition holographic trading card styling I'd really be much happier with a Jack Kirby edition of *Miracle Man*. As I understand it, however, *Spawn* is a bit popular with the younger generation nowadays, and with a mask rather like Spider Man's, along with a serious line in collars, he's come to the SNES – complete with some tatty old storyline about kidnapped brats having their innocence trapped in an Orb Of Purity (I kid you not). Cue some top radical new style of gameplay then, as you guide Spawn towards his final terrible encounter deep within the Darklands (pause for effect)...

Naaah, I didn't think so either. *Spawn* adheres to all three clauses of the prime rule of licensed videogames – they must be either a platformer, one-on-one fighting game or scrolly beat-'em-up. This, therefore, is a scrolly beat-'em-up with, erm, bits of platform and fighting stuff mixed in for good measure.

Ol' Spawny's a good-

Todd McFarlane's SPAWN

I had some spawn once. I kept it in a jar in my bedroom and right smelly it was too.

Spawn's deadly cry rings out across the rooftops to all evildoers everywhere – "Ulirkakakakakakaaa!"

BLIMEY! THEM'S FRIGHTFUL POWERS ALL RIGHT!

As part of the deal for being Spawn (as if you'd want to be), he's made some dodgy arrangement with a demon blokie who looks like some underworld version of Private Walker from *Dad's Army*. In exchange for some top 'frightful powers', Spawn has a counter which goes down each time he unleashes an FP. Should he get a bit over-enthusiastic and force the counter to reach zero, Spawn's job as Defender of Children goes up in smoke and he becomes the servant of demon blokie. What this boils down to is that you might have some fancy moves but you can't just throw them around willy-nilly. Okay?

Lummie, it's a top firey dragon attack that involves you flying up in the air and coming back down again. Frightening eh, readers?

If you only learn one 'frightful power' let it be one that revives your life bar.

Ahaaa! Foolish henchman, I shall teleport on top of you.

A number of your powers involve unleashing green globules of stuff.

Avoid being targeted (and thus shot at) while scaling the dizzy heights. A nice, if undemanding, touch.

looking sprite with a veritable army of moves at his disposal (cue a severe case of button panic). Combine this with his eight 'frightful powers' and he looks ready to take on almost anyone. A mastery of the basic movements is essential, warns the instruction booklet (along with some other guff about evil and self-discovery). Alas, the cannon fodder that populate the main bulk of the levels (the scrolly beat-'em-up bit) don't give you any reason to use anything other than a standard punch or kick with the odd sliding attack whenever you meet someone armed with a gun. It's only when you come up against the inevitable end-of-level boss geezer that you suddenly find yourself all fingers-and-thumbs as you desperately try to loose off that Searing Fist Blast which you couldn't be bothered to learn earlier. It's a bit of a jolt, but it's the beginning of the game and I can forgive *Spawn* this initial little problemette.

So now I've had to learn some of Spawn's 'frightful powers' and I'm waiting for the next bit of action in which to unleash them, my fingers hovering, praying mantis-like, over the joypad. But up comes the second level and once again I don't need them. There may be the addition of a vertically scrolling platformy bit where you have to avoid a gun sight but this too is scarily easy. None of the enemies require more than two hits to dispose of and it's only a matter of minutes before you come up against the next boss (whose name is Redeemer but I shall call him – very loudly and forcefully – ❄*✌√♠!!), where not only are you required to know all the moves and 'frightful powers', but know them so intimately you have to merge with your joypad in a blur of expertise.

It was a fine (if uninspired) idea for *Spawn* to try and include all three of the standard license game themes, but the beat-'em-up bit is too easy, the platform bit is too easy and the fighting bit is too unfair. Unless your enthusiasm for *Spawn* runs to a green-and-purple licensed quilt cover and a penchant for running around the house using a red tea towel as a cape, shouting "I must save the children!", this is just another superhero game to give a miss.

● **Wil Overton**

WELCOME, SPAWN. WELCOME TO MY HARD BITS. HAHAHAHAHHHH!!

While the majority of *Spawn* is remarkably easy, the end-of-level bosses tend to prove more of a problem. At least one of them had a couple of the *Super Play* team offering forth expletives you'd never normally hear coming from polite young people in the '90s.

Jumping at the right time to avoid Redeemer's beam can prove a tad frustrating.

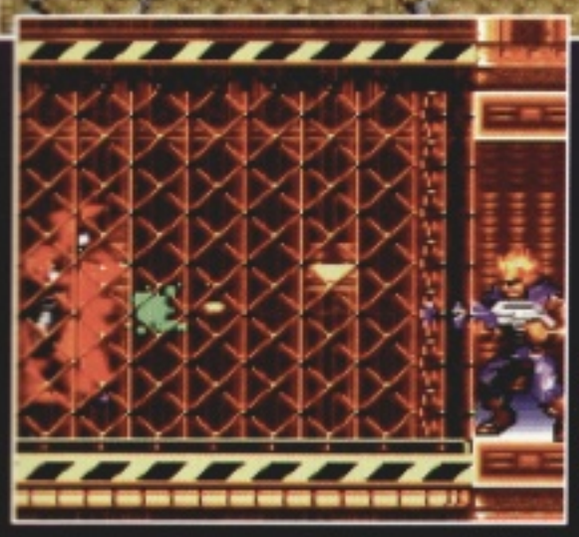
Ha! I have doffed you, Redeemer blokie. I am a great Spawn.

Nooo! He still lives but now he's three times as hard and is in possession of unfair moves.

The Video Game

Why do super-powered villains use bog-standard not super-powered henchmen?

Now here's a top funny event. It's right at the start of the game and you don't even have to move. All the baddie henchmen just jump to their dooms. Oh how we laughed.

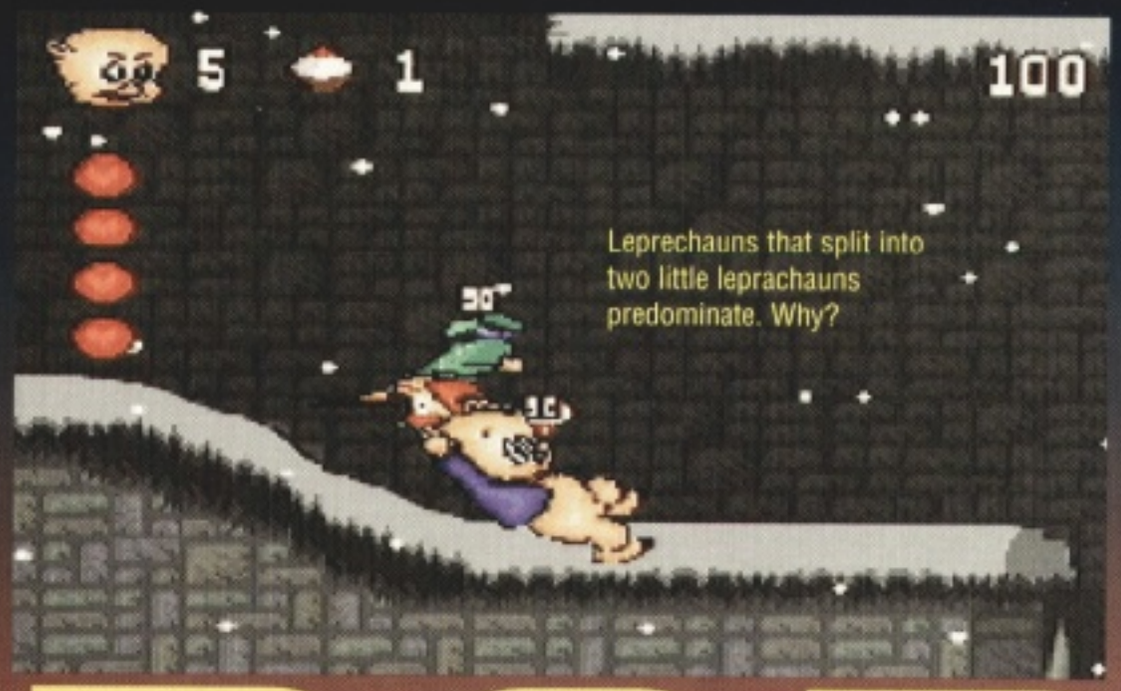


Shoot me. See if I care, for I have a Cloak Of Protection™.

SPAWN
Acclaim

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
75%	77%	54%
GAMELIFE	**OVERALL SCORE:**	
60%		56%

VERDICT: I fail to see how a company can recoup its development and promotional outlay on such an 'average' game. Surely the artists and programmers could tell what sort of old toot they were churning out as they laboured away. *Spawn* is just the sort of title you'll ponder over and then walk away from when it's languishing in the bargain bin for a tenner in a couple of months time.



Look: a level intro screen. That's exciting, isn't it?

PORKY

See, a ghost town full of leprechauns.

B-LIST

Sadly, in everything he does Porky is consistently overshadowed. Possibly the least funny cartoon character EVER, he's never been able to compete with his peers. It's the same old story in the videogame world, I'm afraid. If you haven't already got *Mickey Mania* and you're after a quality platformer for, hey, kids of all ages, then get that instead. Sorry, Porky.

Mickey trounces Porky's attempt with ease, and looks nicer.

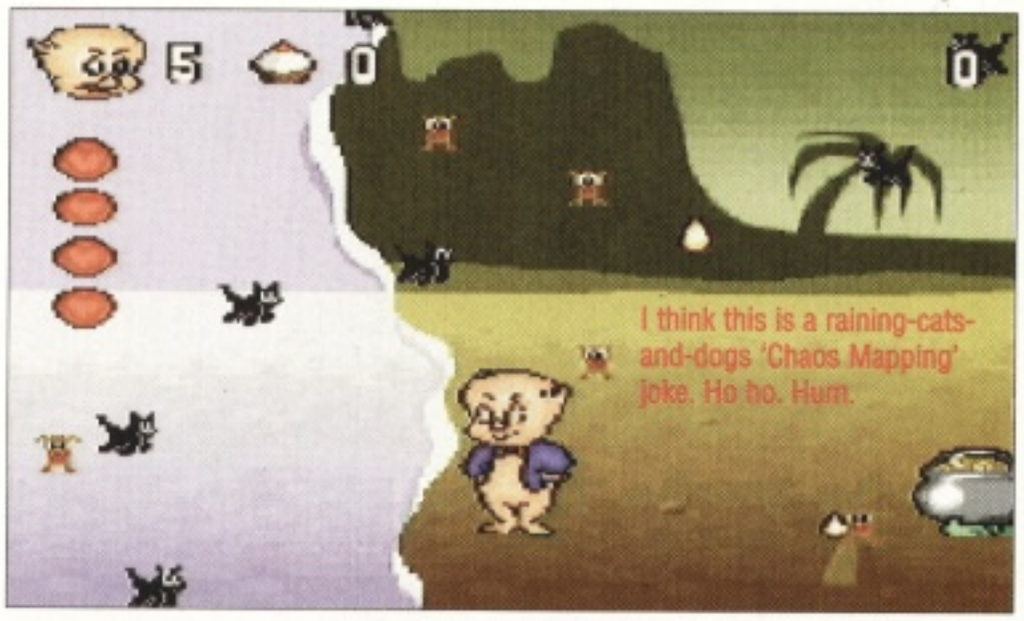
We were hardly expecting some sort of *Mortal Kombat* meets *Doom* in a hellish morphing cartoon world of entrails and bacon slicers from the stuttering, least-funny member of the Warner stable, but let's get this straight at the start. This is a simple game for kids and as such doesn't go out of its way to innovate, over-tax your reflexes or bother your average youngster's additive-addled brain.

From the half-effort at a plot – Porky has a nightmare – to the overwhelmingly basic structure of the whole thing, *Porky's* could almost act as a remedial course in gaming which, I suppose, is what it is. And strangely it's all right. Not great, or exciting, or even good. Just all right.

The easiest comparison to make is with *Mickey Mania*, and *Porky's* doesn't really come up to scratch here. The stock platform elements are all here – temporary platforms, swings, restart points – but there's a distinct lack of the extra-little-bonus-bits, sub-levels and semi-puzzles that lifted *Mickey's* effort above the usual tie-in dross. *Porky's'* animation's not that great either and the levels, which are far from stunning themselves, are populated by some of the blandest baddies seen for a while, all of which are firmly in the Backwards and Forwards, Completely Oblivious school of obstaclery.

Porky's world: nothing like our own.

The size of Porky himself is something of a hindrance as you heave a very close-up view of the levels resulting in – spook! – those good old fashioned leaps of faith. How many times do developers have to be told that these are A Bad Thing? Especially when the bottom of the screen often proves fatal or at best a set-back requiring back-tracking and tedious climbing on the more 'complex' levels.



l intro screen. That's exciting, isn't it?

The first level boss is as hard as he is frightening.

(Left) Porky, a sort of line thing, and some stuff. (*Yeah, thanks, Will – Ed*)

Y PIG'S

Chaos Mapping System? What's that, then? Nothing amazing, rest assured...

Haunted Holiday

PORKY PIG'S HAUNTED HOLIDAY

Acclaim

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
80%	79%	79%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	
73%	72%	

VERDICT: *Porky* **wears its heart on its sleeve and tattooed on its heart are the words "simple, formulaic platformer for kids".**

boat

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On the other hand, the game is accomodating in nearly every other respect. You get a generous helping of hit-points, lives and continues, so frustration is kept at bay – particularly handy for 'youngsters'. The downside of this, of course, is that the game turns into something of a trawl, and with minimal freedom to choose your route and very little in the way of variety in each level, a dullish one at that.

But surely, this being 1996, with super-consoles banging on the door and all, Acclaim must have managed to get some sort of game-salvaging technical innovation in? Well, sort of. The Chaos Mapping System (seriously) means that, wait for it, every time you play the weather could be DIFFERENT!

One time it might be snowing, the next raining. Reset and you might even be lucky enough to get some fog. That's all right then, and best of all, it makes no difference to the gameplay. Phew. Sigh.

Basically, then, *Porky's* is a simplistic, formulaic, derivative kid's platformer with a small piece of bolt-on bunkum that's hard to hate. With its clear, semi-pretty graphics and decent animation, simplistic structure and bankable star, *Porky Pig's Haunted Holiday* should please children and dimwits. And dimwitted children.

● **Will Groves**

UK Release

Game: Porky Pig's Haunted Holiday
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Sunsoft
Price: Shop around
Release: Out now
Players: 1
Cart ROM: 16 Mbit

THE BEST BIT

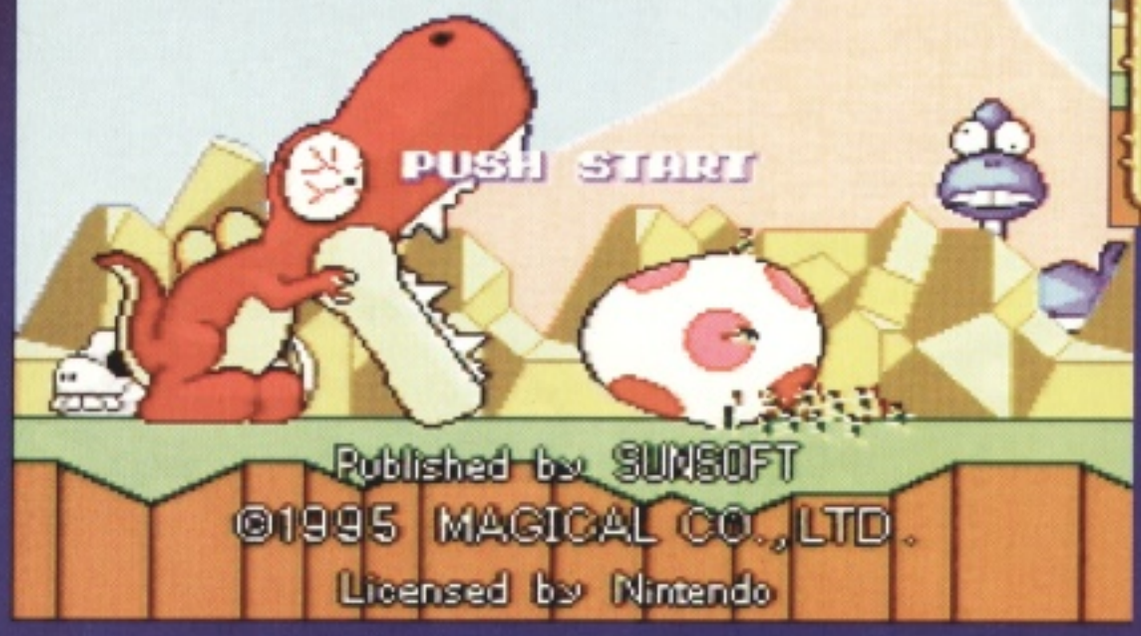
The best bit of the game is completely non-interactive and is over as soon as you start the first level. Porky drops off, excited at the prospect of his first vacation in years and the screen goes a bit wobbly in a time-warp/dream-sequence signifying way. That's it. The best bit.

Never sleep, ever. It's boring, apart from anything else.

The dinos share a particularly funny joke.

UK Release

Game: Hungry Dinosaurs
Publisher: Marubeni
Developer: Sunsoft
Price: £39.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 4 simultaneously
Cart ROM: 4 Mbit

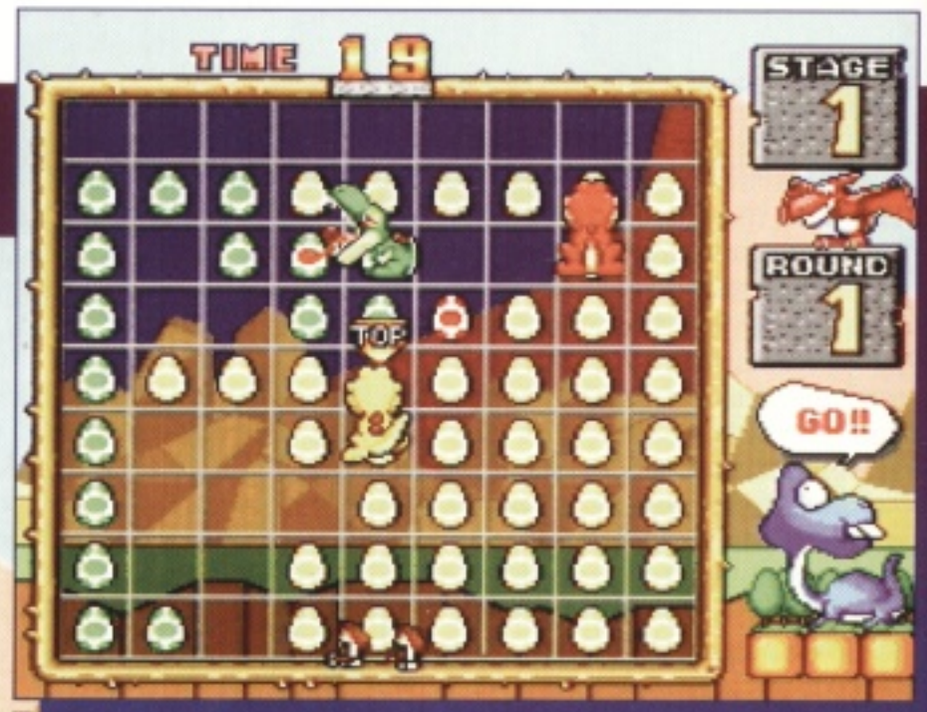


The intro screen features an especially fearsome dinosaur. It's the best bit of the game.

Everything about *Hungry Dinosaurs* reeks of quality. Every aspect screams out "Instant classic!" The style, the characters, the sounds, the simple concept... it all points to a surefire hit. But there's one problem, and it's a biggie. The gameplay is all wrong. Crap graphics we can live with. Poor sound is even easier to cope with. Heck, we can even overlook a few rough edges in the gameplay department from time to time if the rest of the the package makes up for it. But when the gameplay smells like an old sock that's been left too long in the laundry basket, there's really no hope. We'll talk about specific problems a bit later.

First let's get the dinosaur thing cleared up. You play a little dinosaur (or up to four dinosaurs if you've pals and a multitap kicking around), and your sole aim in life is to be more productive than the other dinosaurs inhabiting your little square, grid-like world. End of story. But this perhaps overly-simple tale of prehistoric chompery is the perfect vehicle for a puzzle game in the classic mould. For a start there are the graphics. These are massively colourful and cartoonish featuring characters that stylistically borrow a lot from our old friend Yoshi. The cartoony theme runs strongly through every screen along with very precisely designed intros, end screens and sequences between the levels. Also the little game characters cry when defeated, jump up and down when victorious, interact with the score panel on the right hand side of the screen and so on. And why is this reviewer wibbling on about these things? The point I'm trying to make is that it has a very classic look to it and, it must be said, the whole thing is flawlessly executed. Switching on for the first time is like saying hello to an old friend. But now for that major problem...

The basic premise of the game simply doesn't work. The rules suggest that you must lay as many eggs on the screen as possible within a tight time limit. If you have more eggs on screen than your opponent at the end of the time limit you win. You can eat your opponent's eggs during the game and if you place an egg of your own colour at either end of an opponents' row or column of eggs, all the ones in between switch to your colour. The process of actually doing this is very slow and tedious as your dinosaurs plod from square to square laying eggs and pausing even longer when eating an egg. So no points for excitement there.



This is the three-player mode in full flow. As you can see, yellow is "top".

Some games are slightly left of centre, some are a bit off beam, some are a little wide of the mark. And some, well, some just completely miss the point.

HUNGRY DINOSAURS

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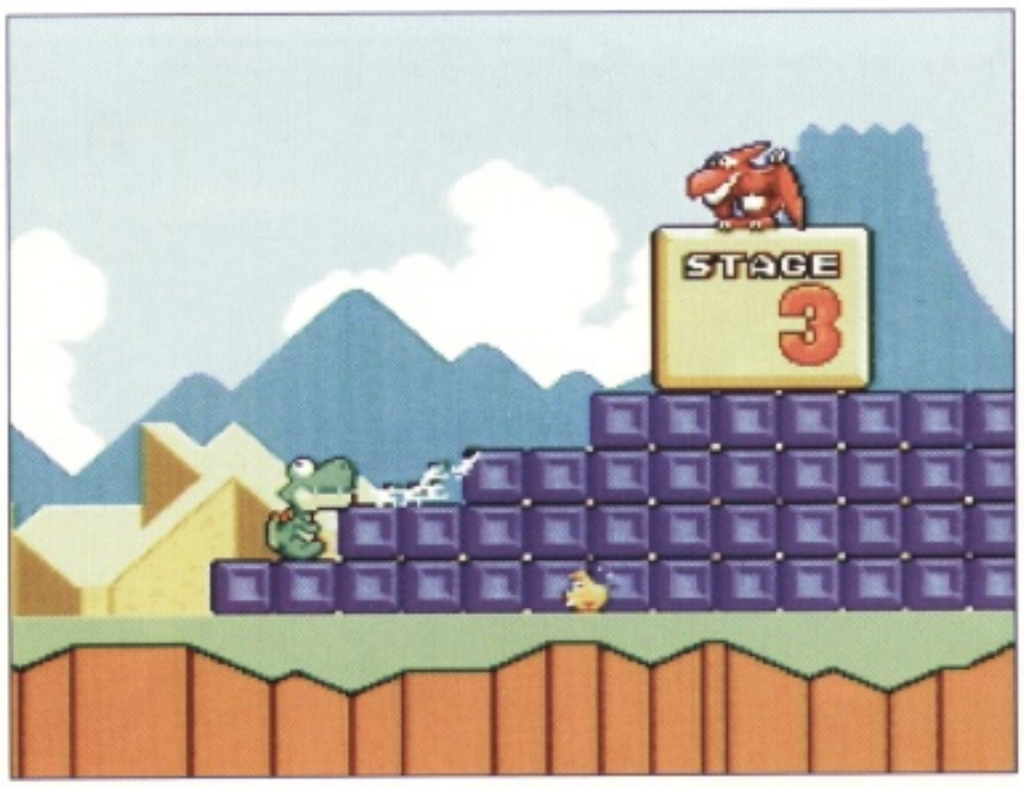
On top of that, the whole idea of the game (which you'll probably have already noticed bears a striking resemblance to the rules of Awari, or is it Othello?) doesn't work at all well in this format. When plodding through a two-player game a colleague made the very astute point that "It's like playing a strategy game without enough time to think about any strategies." And that is the over-riding bug in our ointment. Very basic strategies do become apparent as you play more but the experience is cumbersome, unenthralling and you can't help but feel that it's ultimately pointless. It's upsetting really because if you look at that old stonker *Bomberman*, it was a nice simple idea, lovingly crafted and it turned out brilliantly. *Hungry Dinosaurs* also is a nice simple idea, lovingly crafted but in this instance it just doesn't hang together.

● **Simon Forrester**



Another chucklesome scene unfolds while you wait to play the next stage. The dino-chases-humans-towards-pterodactyl routine is hilarious.

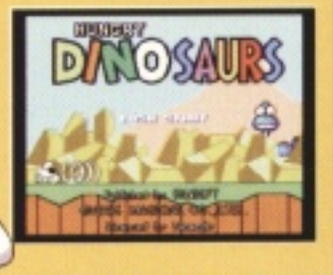
The tag game sees two players cooperating against two other players. A right laugh.

The timer has run out and sadly there can be only one winner. And it's yellow.

Blue bloke pulls off a stunning victory leaving the wussy green geezer blubbing like a baby.

HUNGRY DINOSAURS

Sunsoft



GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
75%	75%	31%
GAMELIFE 66%	OVERALL SCORE:	35%

VERDICT: Has all the visual hallmarks of a classic puzzler but just doesn't cut it. In fact, so misplaced is the concept that it represents only a mildly entertaining diversion at the very most.

HIGH SPEED TACTICS!!!

Only some kind of genius could work out any real strategies for *Hungry Dinosaurs* within the constraints of its time limits and head-to-head style, but here are a few pointers as to what may (or may not) help you along the road to victory.

First secure the corners and the outermost squares. This will ensure that your opponent can't surround your eggs with his own. A simple but, we think you'll agree, brilliant tactic that'll get you to the end of the game in no time.

Hmm, actually, my opponent slaughtered me in that last game. So instead try this tasty little number. Place your eggs in solid little blocks in the middle of the screen. In that way you can protect them as if your life depended on it. He won't stand a chance.

Forget what we just said. He won again. No, instead, just randomly lay eggs, watch in horror as your opponent turns them all his own colour, then turn them all back again and keep repeating this soul-destroying routine in the vain hope that you'll have the majority of the eggs when the timer runs out.

KONAMI

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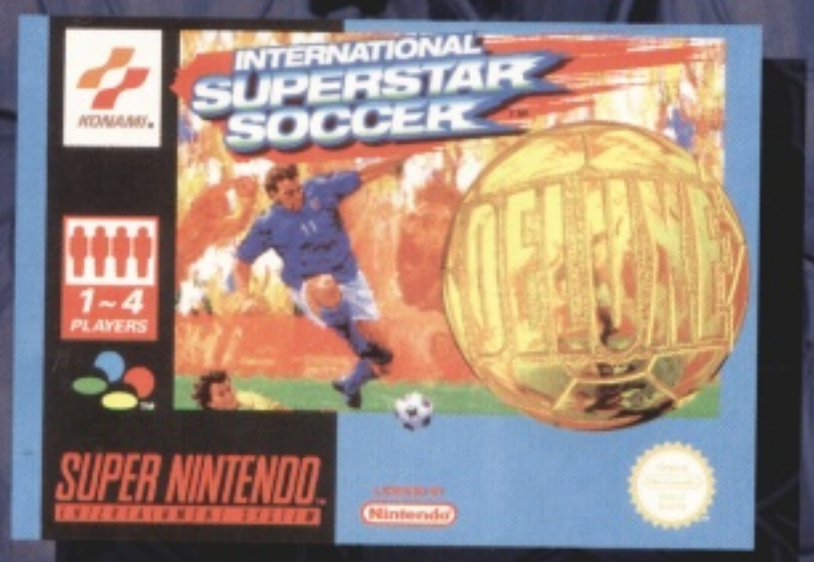
It's a whole new ball game...



It's more than just a sequel...

New teams, new players, new stadiums, new strategies and new techniques.

- ★ Realistic player sprites with brand new animations and skills
- ★ Increased CPU intelligence to challenge beginners and experts alike
- ★ 36 international teams featuring recognisable celebrity players
- ★ Real, live commentary, 7 different stadiums and new stadium video screen
- ★ International Cup, World Series and fully editable tournament modes
- ★ Choose from 16 formations, 8 strategies, 20 players and 9 adjustable player skills to create your perfect team
- ★ Four way play also possible

A load of old balls it ain't!

Release Date: 3rd November 1995

SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

The unpopular number 32 celebrates all by himself.

After years of experimentation with sideways views, more truly 3-D perspectives and some very odd control mechanisms, the forces of console evolution seem to have settled on the best possible format for a Gridiron game. That format is called *Madden*, and *NFL Quarterback Club* shamelessly 'adapts' the successful up-the-pitch view and playbook navigation system. *Madden* itself has already done some filching of its own, mind.

After treading water in its last incarnation, having added virtually nothing but stats, the man with the long belt found that his series' domination became threatened by *QBC*'s addition of a whole different side to the game – a training camp. This year's officially endorsed updated release builds squarely on those firmly-laid foundations. The training facilities are now second to none, and certainly way ahead of *Madden '96*'s retaliatory, half-hearted *Track 'n' Field* rip-off. Best of all is the ability to build and refine a custom team, hand picking up to ten players in key positions and working with them in practice, individually and as a unit. You can customise shirts, abilities, skin colour, predominant hand, and you can even call them all Lisa or, if you prefer, Veronica.

NFLQBC let itself down on the pitch last year and this is where the biggest breakthrough's been made for *'96*. Although it still doesn't have quite the same feel as *Madden*, and bearing in mind that *Madden '96* has added secondary receivers, this comes a close second. True, the animation won't blow you away – it's pretty poor – but the players are more mobile, the passing easier and the playbook extensive.

As usual, non-gridiron fans will take a lot of convincing but anyone who knows the game and has enjoyed *Madden* in the past might want to consider sacrificing just a tiny bit of the Fat One's on-field experience for the more managerial/coaching experience of *NFLQBC '96*. Or not, as the case may be – it's a close call between the two.

● **Will Groves**

UK Release

Game: NFL Quarterback Club '96
Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Iguana
Price: £39.99
Release: Out now
Players: 1 to 5
Cart ROM: 24 Mbit

Six yards is NOT very good, is it?

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '96 Acclaim

GRAPHICS	SOUND	GAMEPLAY
83%	85%	90%
GAMELIFE	OVERALL SCORE:	89%
92%		

VERDICT: Boasting more depth than *Madden* and now significantly improved both on the field and presentation-wise, *NFLQBC'96* must be worth serious consideration.

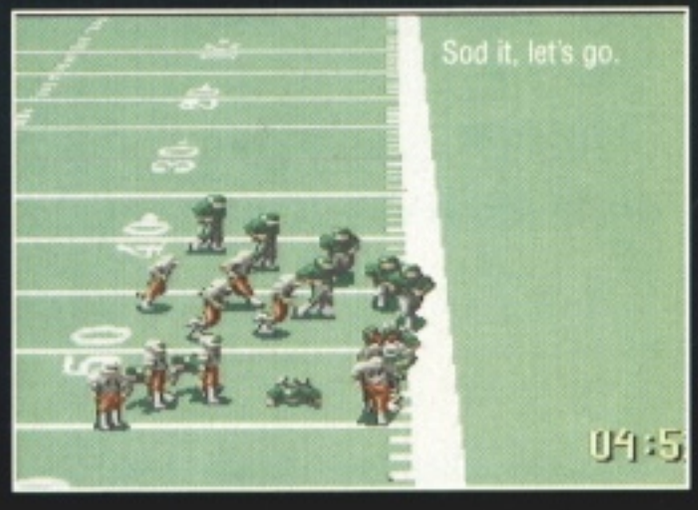
NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '96

You're all asking, "Can the latest pretender to the throne oust The Fat One?" That would be telling...

MAGIC MOMENTS

True fans of the game will recognise many of the scenarios available in the simulation mode, where you get to play those final nerve-biting minutes in several famous, actual games. The rest of us probably won't bother, but cheers anyway.

Remember when? No.



SUPER GAME BOY ARCADE CLASSICS

Greetings. Top *Super Play* helper-outer Josse here. The '90s have been a fine time for retrospection and rediscovering old classics... just ask The Beatles. Oh, on second thoughts, don't. Still, whether you're feeling Free As A Bird or you are, indeed, The Walrus you might be interested in Nintendo's latest scheme – two games on one SGB cart that offer a return to the arcades of, ooh, ten to 15 years ago. Being a bit old and everything myself, I've been roped in to tell you about them. Blimey, how many ten pees did we shovel into these machines between us, Tony?

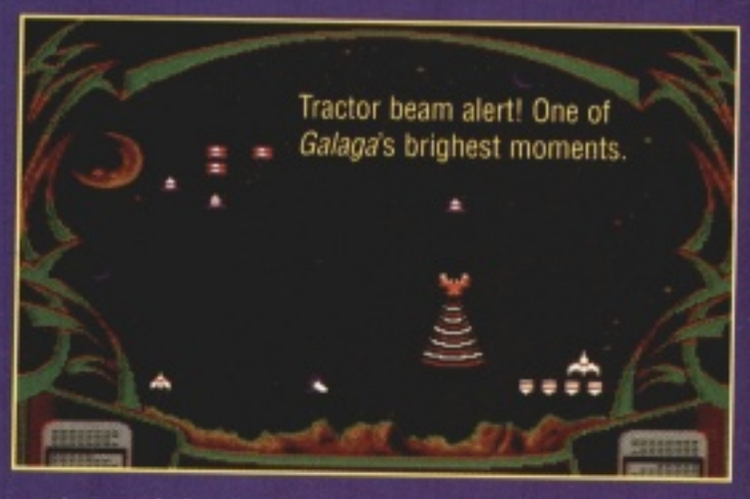
Asteroids & Missile Command

Josse: In case you're not familiar with *Asteroids*, this is one of the most played, most loved and most hated arcade games ever. The game's no more complex than the screenshot: a line-drawn 'spaceship' rotates, thrusts and teleports about, avoiding the asteroids it's shooting. The game gets faster and the screen more crowded as you progress, and you'll occasionally get one of two types of alien spacecraft drifting on screen to have a pop at too. And, apart from a rather pointless updated graphics version thrown in to the barg, that's it.

Missile Command, dating from 1981, looks better and has gameplay that's just a tad more complex, with you directing a crosshair to intercept incoming fire that's bent on destroying your *Space Invaders*-esque cities. Slower yet more intense than *Asteroids*, it's a case of juggling priorities as you dish out blastage.

Tony: Well, with neither game do you get as sharp a gameplay experience as that of the coin-op originals – the Super Game Boy format just doesn't have enough pixels. They're both fair renditions, though, with *Asteroids* being my fave of

Galaxian & Galaga



Josse: *Galaxian* is basically an updated *Space Invaders*, with THREE colours and the innovative concept that amounts to the same faceless, nameless aliens performing the same *SI* crab-like jitter, then COMING DOWN THE SCREEN IN SWOOPING WAVES, shooting and aiming at you, kamikaze-style. Basic. Excellent. Hasn't changed a bit in 15 years.

Galaga is the 1981 update of *Galaxian*. It's *Galaxian*'s big brother, with FOUR colours and patterns of nameless, faceless alien invaders that COME DOWN THE SCREEN IN SWOOPING WAVES and *then* sit at the top with a crab-like jitter. Brighter, a tad faster, and including the classic two-ships power-up option and the fantastic bonus challenge waves. Both games feature turn-taking two-player options, incidentally.

Tony: Both of these use SNES-specific code – although you still have to play in a Game Boy-

Defender & Joust

Josse: The intro screen to this is ace! You scroll sideways between two old-school arcade machines. One is 1980's classic *Defender* and next to it, 1982's not-quite-so-classic *Joust*.

Defender, we're glad (and yes, rather sad) to say is still great. The graphics are made up of a bog-basic ten-pixel(ish) spaceship blasting about in a horizontally-scrolling wraparound spacescape, with you protecting a group of humans who're being stolen away by an alien invasion. It's as fast as you like and features the terrific inertia that kept us glued to the coin-op. These truly were the days when gameplay was unspoilt by graphics. Cor!

Joust was an odd one in its day, and even now, on the brink of the next generation of gaming, the concept of flapping about on large birds, jousting your way to a high score is still more than a little strange. The filler to *Defender*'s top drawer appeal, perhaps.

You'll need to put a few hours in on *Joust* before you become at one with your steed.

Tony: Despite (or perhaps because of) its non-convential gameplay, I've always loved *Joust*, and the version here is quite a passable one – certainly enough to drag me away from *Diddy's Kong Quest* for half-an-hour. You really feel the pinch of the Super Game Boy's restraints with *Defender*, mind – everything seems just a bit too big for comfort. As a pair, though, a pretty good little package.

OVERALL SCORE: 7/10

Game: Defender & Joust
Developer: Williams
Price: £21.99
Release: Out now

You'll note the obvious similarities between these two games. Just how did they get away with it? You'll also note that the coin-op cabinets represented in the games' borders offer track-ball control. Worry not, though – a joypad works just fine.

Centipede & Millipede

Josse: Not sure what this is doing under the header *Arcade Classics* – neither game ever quite reached that status. While they both employ the same basic formula as *Space Invaders* and *Galaxian*, they just don't cut the mustard. Okay, so there's a theme that your, ahem, spaceship, is offing insects and creepy crawlies rather than alien life forms, but that's hardly a selling point.

Blast away to destroy the advancing centipede (or, in the case of the more colourful but otherwise not greatly improved update, millipede), while avoiding his insect cronies and not getting too bogged down with those inconvenient toadstools. The appeal of retro gaming is rediscovering classics whose appeal is the fun you invent around their simplicity, but that just doesn't happen with this disappointing package.

Tony: I mistakenly got hold of *Centipede* when I attempted to resurrect my Atari VCS software collection a while back and it was as dull then as it is here. *Millipede*'s no great improvement, either, making this pair the runts of the litter.

OVERALL SCORE: 3/10

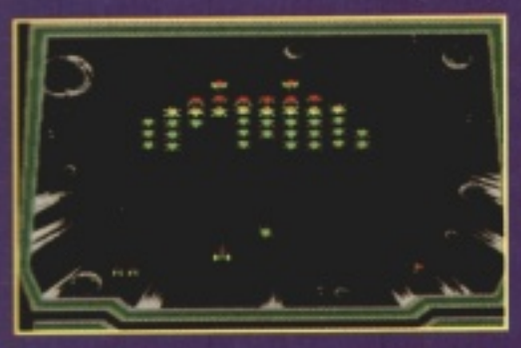
Game: Centipede & Millipede
Developer: Atari/Accolade
Price: £21.99
Release: Out now

Things look grim. Still, who cares about saving the world?

OVERALL SCORE: 6/10

Game: Asteroids & Missile Command
Developer: Atari/Accolade
Price: £21.99
Release: Out now

esque window, unlike Nintendo's previous UK release of Taito's *Space Invaders* – meaning that you get better use of colour and some proper (and quite faithful) sound effects than normal SGB titles. *Galaga* beats the pants off *Galaxian*, of course, and proves quite challenging, in an embarrassed-to-admit-it kind of way.



You can almost smell the must of the arcade when you play *Galaxian*.

OVERALL SCORE: 7/10

Game: Galaxian & Galaga
Developer: Namco
Price: £21.99
Release: Out now

SPECIAL

WHAT CART?

If you're new to the SNES, or if you're looking to find out how good that cartridge you don't recognise from your local game shop is, guidance is at hand in the form of this exhaustive round-up...

NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
3D Baseball	(JAP) Jaleco	SP19	63% Loaded to the gills with Japanese text, making it difficult to tell what's going on. (Unless you're Japanese, obv.)
100% Cotton	(JAP) Datam Polystar	SP21	79% Content trades off to style in this great-looking scrolling shoot-'em-up starring a broomstick-riding witch.
90 Minutes	(UK) Ocean	SP39	55% Disappointing footy title that pales in the face of competition from *FIFA '96* and (especially) *ISSD*.
Aaahh!!! Real Monsters	(UK)Viacom	SP38	65% A marginally entertaining three-character platformer that's worth a laugh if you can pick it up at a budget price.
Addams Family Values	(UK) Ocean	SP31	75% An open exploration game, featuring plenty of Wandering About™ and Getting Bored™.
Alcahest	(JAP) Falken/Square	SP18	69% Taking *Zelda* and making it harder must've looked good on paper. The execution is uninspired if competent.
Andre Agassi Tennis	(US) Technagic	SP22	52% Agassi might be able to pull Brooke Shields but his SNES game is crappy. Not a patch on *Super Tennis*, of course.
Animaniacs	(UK) Konami	SP26	28% Jon Nash said of this game: "Less a clever game based on a funny cartoon, more a grindingly tedious disaster." Ouch.
Ardy Lightfoot	(UK) Titus	SP29	83% A My First Platformer with cutesy graphics and predictable gameplay making it "fine for the young'uns".
Astro Go! Go!	(JAP) Meldac	SP20	51% Amusing, *F-Zero* clone which reviewer Jon Davies disliked but of which Tony said "wasn't that bad actually."
Bassin's Black Bass	(US) Hot B	SP34	65% An original, relaxing, and surprisingly deep (sorry) fishing game. Yup, we said fishing game.
Batman Forever	(UK) Acclaim	SP36	61% A humourless, soulless game designed merely to fill boxes marked '*Batman Forever*'. Nice soundtrack, though.
Battle Cars	(US) Namco	SP19	73% Listen: weak two-player modes spoil racing games. And this *Mad Max*-esque effort has a very grotty one indeed.
Battle Pinball	(JAP) Banpresto	SP34	68% Pinball meets computer game designers and comes off worse. Bright colours don't make up for poor gameplay.
Beauty and the Beast	(UK) HudsonSoft	SP23	71% Lord knows how Hudson got the licence for a Disney game, but here it is and it's both pretty-looking and pretty dull.
Beavis and Butthead	(UK) Viacom	SP36	39% "This sucks my butt." "Yeah – ahuh – butt – ahuh huh." A truly offensive scrolly platformy beat-'em-uppy thing.
Big Hurt Baseball	(UK) Acclaim	SP39	70% A neat and tidy version of baseball with motion-captured graphics. But B-A-S-E-B-A-L-L? Give us *ISSD* any day.
Biker Mice from Mars	(UK) Konami	SP31	71% It tries so desperately to be *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* but fails on gameplay points. (The tacky Snickers license doesn't help.)
Blackhawk	(UK) Interplay	SP27	76% Pretender to the *Flashback* throne. Please, take careful note of the word 'pretender'.
Bonkers	(UK) Capcom	SP27	74% Cute platform fun. Can you say "kill the cute thing"? Like the cartoon with sub-*Animaniacs* film lampoons.
Boogerman	(UK) Interplay	SP32	56% Another. Tedious. Platform. Game. The novelty of super-powered farts and burps soon wears wafer thin.
Brain Lord	(US) Enix	SP25	81% Decent action RPG with some entertaining puzzly bits. It looks a bit wonky when compared to *Zelda III*, obviously.
Brandish	(US) Koei	SP34	53% More below-par RPG antics from the masters of under-par tat. Action-heavy *Soulblazer* wannabe, with nob graphics.
Breath of Fire	(US) Capcom/Square	SP24	80% The Super Play cover was better than the game, but it remains an absorbing, if repetitious on occasion, RPG. Hmm.
Buggs Bunny Rabbit Rampage	(US) Sunsoft	SP19	58% You'll have a hoot picking out the Looney Tunes characters in here, but the platforminess around them spoils the fun.
Cannon Fodder	(UK) Virgin	SP28	89% We don't really like Amiga games on *Super Play*, but this is one exception. Topper action-based wargaming all the way.
Caravan Shooting	(JAP) Hudsonsoft	SP37	52% A collection of old coin-ops converted in such a fashion that you'll believe your SNES is in fact an 8-bit machine.
Carrier Aces	(UK) Gametek	SP34	39% Japanese kamikaze pilots would be insulted by this. (If they hadn't all killed themselves.)
Castlevania Vampire's Kiss	(UK) Konami	SP35	80% Not as good as the original, but it does its best to replicate doses of that classic *'Vania* playability.
Champions World Class Soccer	(UK) Acclaim	SP19	66% Endorsed by Ryan Giggs (in the days he could play), this is a typically below-parr 'soccer' game from the States.
Charles Barkley Shut Up and Jam!	(UK) Sony	SP28	73% Sony Imagesoft Shut Up and Write a Proper Basketball game, more like...
Choplifter III	(UK) Ocean	SP18	80% Blatantly riding the retro wave, Beam (*Shadowrun*) Software's shoot-'em-up sequel is limited but dreamy fun.
Chrono Trigger	(US) Square	SP37	90% A paperback RPG to Square's *Final Fantasy* hardback epic. Wil loves it, of course, but then he loves everything RPG-ish.
Clayfighter 2	(UK) Interplay	SP28	87% A pretty beat-'em-up that is, unfortunately, a total gimmick from start to finish. (Can't wait to see the M2 version, arf!)
Death and Return of Superman	(US) Sunsoft	SP25	29% Licence + scrolling beat-'em-up = dreadful tat. Supey would turn in his grave. Or would he? We haven't a clue, frankly.
Demolition Man	(UK) Acclaim	SP36	75% An inventive, unpredictable licence platformer. What? Yeah, Tony recommends the zip-lines level. Oh he's so ker-razeee.

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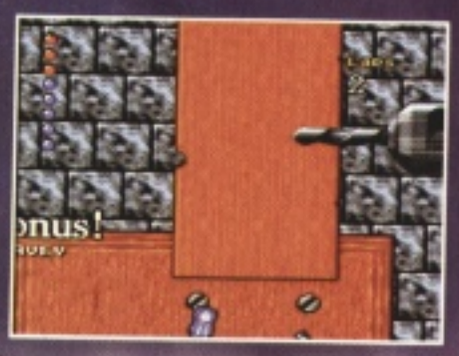
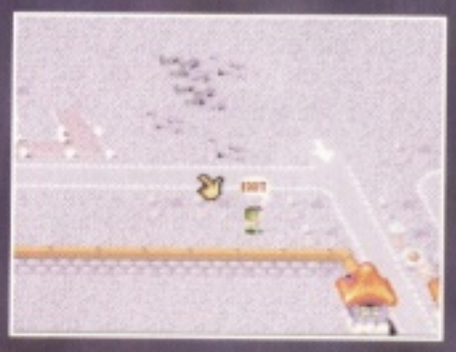
NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Demon's Blazon	(JAP) Capcom	SP27	80% Show-stopping graphics and a great bulging sack full of neat touches in a game that's a teeny bit too easy.
Dirt Racer SFX	(UK) Elite	SP31	51% A Super FX racing game and a pretty grim one at that. Not as good as this next feller...
Dirt Trax FX	(UK) Acclaim	SP38	77% Sculptured Software go Super FX potty once more to produce a natty motah-biking racer which lacks depth.
Donkey Kong Country	(UK) Nintendo	SP27	90% Ray-traced platform Kong fun that everyone got for Christmas, learning about gameplay/graphics the hard way.
Doom	(UK) Ocean	SP36	92% It is, as they say, *Doom* – but on the SNES. Most of the PC original's levels and features are present and correct.
Double Dragon V	(US) Tradewest	SP25	39% The first *Double Dragon* game was quite good. In the arcades. But part five on the SNES? Just look at the score.
Dragon	(UK) Virgin	SP21	88% More a clone of old beat-'em-ups such as *IK+* than *SFII*, and therefore not as enjoyable. Playable enough, though.
Dragon Ball Z 2	(JAP) Bandai	SP17	76% Though the score suggests an above average game, looking back on *DBZ2* it's little more than a dull, quirky beat-'em-up
Dragon Ball Z 3	(JAP) Bandai	SP27	70% *DBZ3* is to *DBZ2* what *DBZ2* was to *DBZ1*. Got that? Er, the series got better as it went on, but never brilliant.
Dragon View	(US) Kemco	SP35	68% An infuriatingly entertaining RPG awash with compounded minor flaws. Bit of a love it/bear it-type scenario, we reckon.
Earthbound	(US) Nintendo	SP35	88% A crude-looking but startlingly different and entertaining RPG set in childhood America. We'll love it forever.
Earthworm Jim	(UK) Virgin	SP29	91% He hasn't got a leg to stand on and he's got no backbone (*Dis-flaming-missed! – Ed*), but he's ina very fine platformer.
Earthworm Jim 2	(UK) Virgin	SP39	85% An excellent sequel albeit with perhaps fewer surprises on offer than that of the original *Jimmer*.
ESPN Speed World	(US) Sony	SP28	60% A depressingly dull racer, despite apparently having more options than God.
Excite Stage '95	(JAP) Epoch	SP34	77% An improvement over the original *ES*, but not one we'd recommend with the likes of *ISSD* and *FIFA* around.
Eye of the Beholder	(US) Capcom	SP21	52% Poor first-person-viewed *Dungeon Master* sequel which incurred the Might Wrath of the Zyster when he reviewed it.
Fatal Fury 2	(UJAP) Takara	SP19	79% Tired by its desperate strivance for membership of the *SFII* Club, Zy rightly judged this to be lacking that certain spark.
Fever Pitch	(UK) US Gold	SP32	78% A passable, meat-and-potatoes footy game. It's supposed to have a humorous twist, but we're buggered if we saw it.
FIFA	(UK) Electronic Arts	SP20	89% An enormous hit on the Mega Drive, this SNES conversion is an accurate one. Looking rather dated these days.
FIFA '96	(UK) Electronic Arts	SP37	84% So what do yez get fer yer '96-ness? Better graphics, tiny speech samples and some new options. Is that enough?
Fighter's History	(US) Data East	SP22	85% Blatant 'homage' to *SFII* and instigator of the famous Capcom vs Data East lawsuit. A very proficient clone in fact.
Final Stretch	(JAP) LOZC	SP19	73% Obscure F1 racing affair which boasted a DSP chip in order to calculate some clever 3D-esque views of the action.
Final Fantasy III	(US) Square Soft	SP26	95% Truly a God among RPGs, making yer average SNES title look about as appealing as an evening with Terry Wogan.
The Firemen	(JAP) Human	SP29	75% A tricky squirt-'em-up that's taxing if not all that original. Run round, *Ghoul Patrol*-style, extinguish fires and rescue folk.
The Flintstones	(US) Taito	SP20	54% The plan: nick some bits from *Mario* and stick 'em together for our own game. The result: a tired, challengless example.
Foreman For Real	(UK) Acclaim	SP37	40% A licence with slick graphics and precious little in the way of gameplay. Fatty should sit down and shut up.
Frantic Flea	(UK) Gametek	SP39	29% Painfully, nay, excruciatingly annoying platformer albeit with nattily produced graphics.
Front Mission	(JAP) Square	SP31	88% Isometric turn-based stategy wargame with enough pace and action to make a two-hour battle just fly by.
Full Throttle Racing	(UK) Gametek	SP26	55% Pretty grim racing game offering a weird mix of Mode 7 jetskiing and traditional motorbiking action.
Ghoul Patrol	(UK) JVC	SP30	82% Not up to the standard of its prequel, *Zombies Ate My Neighbours*, but pretty close. Good B-movie-parody fun.
Goemon 2	(JAP) Konami	SP17	90% Sequel to groundbreaking Legend Of Mystical Ninja with a heavier action slant but all its playability and charm.
Hagane	(UK) Virgin	SP32	74% A surprise UK release, this platform actioner from Hudson Soft is very Japanese, and entertaining and tough with it.
Hammerin' Harry	(JAP) Irem	SP23	77% If we had a hammer we'd hammer all over this game for not living up to what was expected from it. Oh yes.
Hardball 3	(US) Accolade	SP24	69% Let's make another baseball game! Let's make it similar to the others! Let's get the general thumbs-down from *Super Play*!
Hebereke's Popoon	(UK) Marubeni	SP27	84% Addictive *Puyo*-twist with mad fings. What's a popoon? What's going on with the seemingly random features?
Humans	(UK) Gametek	SP18	70% Uses one of the worst dreign approaches possible, the blatant rip-off (*Lemmings* this time) and stumbles along determinedly.
Illusion of Gaia	(US) Nintendo	SP26	88% Well-produced pseudo-sequel to *Soulblazer* with a great atmosphere to boot. Far from being very challenging, though.
Indiana Jones	(UK) JVC	SP30	29% A grim platform exploration affair which embodies everything that's wrong with licensed games.
Inspector Gadget	(US) Nintendo	SP18	71% Yes, Nintendo did release this – perhaps they were short on products, 'cos this is a less than glorious platformer.
International Superstar Soccer	(UK) Konami	SP30	92% Blimey! A soccer game that scores over 75%! Great dynamic sprites and quick action make this highly enjoyable.



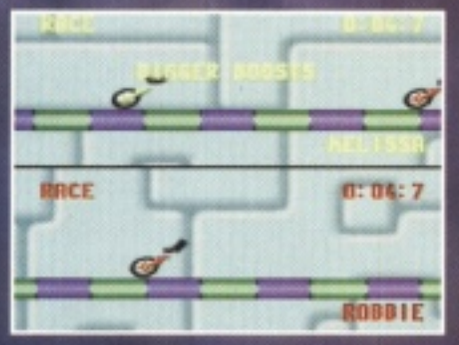
NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
ISS Deluxe	(UK) Konami	SP38	94% Improved over the original in just about every single respect, this goes to prove Konami's continued mastery of the SNES.
James Pond 3	(UK) US Gold	SP32	77% A *Mario* rip-off which came along about two years too late. It has its clever bits but feels like a clone from start to finish.
Jelly Boy	(UK) Ocean	SP25	61% Frustrating platformer whose selling point is that your character can morph into different objects. Yawn...
Fever Pitch	(UK) US Gold	SP32	78% A passable, meat-and-potatoes footy game. It's supposed to have a humorous twist, but we're buggered if we saw it.
The Jetsons	(US) Taito	SP23	76% The sort of platformer that Tony was always lumbered with. This had one or two pleasant surprises in store, though.
Jim Power	(US) Electrobrain	SP23	70% Imagine the most garish European-produced Amiga game possible with a clever 3D glasses bit. That's *JP* alright.
Joe and Mac 2	(US) Data East	SP21	80% The graphics are jolly, by jingo, and the jungly caperings entertaining, but... there's... something... missing.
The Jungle Book	(UK) Virgin	SP21	82% One of two jungle-based platformers dumped on Tony in issue 21. Blimey, we were terrible to him in those days.
Jungle Strike	(UK) E/Arts	SP33	83% Nothing new for *Desert Strike* fans, but a worthy alternative for the rest of us. (Tony hates the series, for what it matters.)
Jurassic Park 2	(UK) Sony	SP27	83% A tough, varied game with a shade too much standard platforminess to make it a classic.
Justice League	(UK) Acclaim	SP34	30% A dreadfully implemented, poorly planned and unplayable beat-'em-up. Why do these things get made?
Kid Klown in Crazy Chase	(US) Kemco	SP27	80% If the entire game was up to the standard of its graphics (they're brill), this would be a classic game. They're aren't.
Kick Off 3	(UK) Anco/Imagineer	SP20	91% Did you know that Anco comes from ANil Gupta (its MD) COmpany? You didn't? We overrated this one incidentally.
Kikikaikai 2	(JAP) Natsume	SP23	79% The sort of game that'll always find a place on our cover, this is fun, very Japanese, but too much like its predecessor.
King Of The Monsters 2	(JAP) Takara	SP17	74% Neo Geo conversion which sets Godzilla-esque monsters against one another in varied settings. Very limited action.
Kirby's Avalanche	(US) Nintendo	SP33	91% *Puyo Puyo* finally goes west in the form of the pink blobster. One of the most addictive and downright fun games ever.
Kirby's Tea Shop	(JAP) Nintendo	SP28	86% Er, sorry, that's *Tee Shot*, actually. It's an odd little golf-type game for odd little gamesplaying people.
Knights of the Round	(US) Capcom	SP21	51% One of the games which started asking questions of Capcom's output, this is a very run-of-the-mill scrolly slasher.
Legend	(US) Seika	SP22	55% Slick but dull slasher. (So baffled, was the designer, by its score that he felt the need to visit us and say so.
Lemmings 2	(UK) Psygnosis	SP26	88% Repeatedly kill even more cute (or rather save) little fluffy creatures in yet more interesting ways.
Lester The Unlikely	(US) Nintendo	SP18	52% Another unlikely (yeah, sorry) Nintendo release that had all the charm of a spent teabag.
Lethal Enforcers	(UK) Konami	SP17	69% Top *Reservoir Dogs*age awaits in this conversion of Konami's exciting but short-lived coin-op blaster.
Liberty Or Death	(US) Koei	SP22	41% Why does Zy do it? Another wargame that withered and wilted under his unflinching glare.
The Lion King	(UK) Virgin	SP29	82% A polished, if not all that innovative platform licence of a film who's name eludes me.
Loderunner Twin	(JAP) T&E Soft	SP24	56% Such potential. Such lack of the finer points of gameplay. Ex-editor James Leach didn't go a packet on this platformer.
Lord of the Rings	(UK) Interplay	SP29	52% A huge, detailed, wandering game ruined by gaping gameplay gaffs. (Some of the music's quite nice, though.)
Lufia and the Fortress of Doom	(US) Taito	SP18	79% If Japanese-produced RPGs work to a template then *Lufia* exemplifies it. While generally sound its sooo predictable.
Madden NFL '95	(UK) E/Arts	SP26	84% Nothing's really changed since *Madden '94*, which isn't really a bad thing, of course. (Er, so long as you enjoyed it.)
Magic Boy	(UK) JVC	SP21	75% Lacks the finesse of its Japanese counterparts but has a fair stab at shaking some puzzly platformy stuff.
Mario's Time Machine	(UK) Mindscape	SP17	60% One of the only 'edutainment' titles on the SNES. Hardly surprising, really: gamers want to be entertained not taught.
Mario's Picross	(UK) Nintendo	SP39	77% Quirky puzzler based on the theme of considered deduction. Chipping away pictures has never been, well, done, actually.
Mary Shelley's Frankenstein	(US) Sony	SP28	69% Well she isn't pretty, but... there's no need to be personal. Bad platformer of an okay film of an excellent book.
The Mask	(UK) THQ	SP38	70% Marginally shallow platform licence fun. Morphs a-plenty ensure variety if not thrills.
Mechwarrior 3050	(UK) Marubeni	SP28	77% Power-crazed destruction on two legs, with some stunning animation but a depressingly short lifespan.
Mega-Lo-Mania	(UK) Imagineer	SP19	81% Engrossing wargame that endeared itself to the Leachster for some reason. Impressive use of speech though.
Mega Man 7	(UK) Marubeni	SP38	79% A reasonable update of the NES and Game Boy instalments of the series, which lacks the spark needed to make it shine.
Mega Man X	(US) Capcom	SP17	86% A fine spin-off from the NES games, which dated horribly upon the release of Nintendo's far superior *Super Metroid*.
Mega Man X2	(US) Capcom	SP30	80% Loaded with Capcom's C-4 co-processor, we expected more from *X2*. It's merely more of the same with a couple of frills.
Metal Marines	(UK) Namcot/Mindscape	SP18	80% Turn-based isometric-viewed other-hyphenated-stuff wargame which proves a lot more shallow than expected.
Michael Jordan	(UK) E/Arts	SP29	83% A platform game based on basketball. The expected ice hockey flight sim sequel never appeared, strangely.

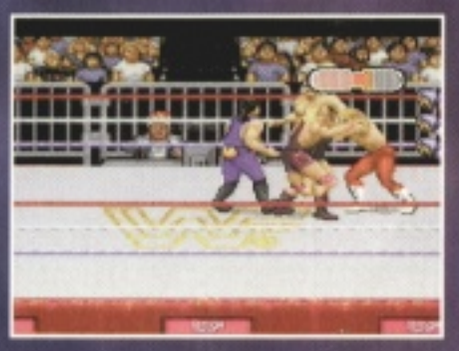
NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Mickey's Magical Quest	(UK) Capcom	SP3	89% Super-slick platformer with graphics to make a mess over. What a pity that it's all over so soon.
Mickey and Minnie	(UK) Capcom	SP27	73% We don't understand the release of this – apart from having a two-player mode it's almost identical to *MMQ*. (And easier.)
Mickey Mania	(UK) Sony	SP26	87% There've been few technically stunning SNES games to come out of the UK, but this is one. Plays fine, looks amazing.
Mickey's Ultimate Challenge	(US) Hi-Tech	SP20	54% One for the younger viewers, as Hi-Tech would be sure to claim. Simple platform bits give way to tedious mind games.
Micro Machines	(UK) Sony	SP26	83% An overhead racer that looks bad, sounds awful, but plays wonderfully. Shame about the presentation.
Micro Machines 2	(UK) Ocean	SP39	86% A great big fat extra wodge of what made the original such a superlative racer. Some of the tracks with drive you nuts.
Mortal Kombat 2	(UK) Acclaim	SP24	90% Realising their grave error, Acclaim brought just about everything across from the coin-op in this sequel. It's fun.
Mortal Kombat 3	(UK) Acclaim	SP37	85% A well-balanced coin-op conversion that would have benefitted from a tad more attention to detail.
Mr Tuff	(UK) Ocean	SP32	74% A few more sprites fall into Ocean's platform game machine. A squirrel, though... why?
Muscle Bomber	(JAP) Capcom	SP22	78% Enormously entertaining wrestling game (in the short term), with skillo four-player mode and great graphics.
NBA Give 'N' Go	(UK) Konami	SP38	85% Arcade-style b-ball title using a clever mix of Mode 7 and jumbo-sized sprites. Not quite as much fun as *NBA Jam*.
NBA Jam Tournament Edition	(UK) Acclaim	SP30	90% A few well-placed tweaks on the superb original, NBA Jam. Fast, and even more arcadey –top for two players.
NBA Live '95	(UK) Electronic Arts	SP26	84% A good basketball game that calls for a fair bit of hoop-shooting skill.
NBA Live '96	(UK) E/Arts	SP37	78% Good basketball fun, but this is more of a sim and not up to *NBA Jam*'s hoop-burning standards.
New Horizons	(US) Koei	SP28	62% "Normal people should flee in terror." Said Zy to this poor sea-bound strategy sleep-inducer.
Newman-Haas Indycar	(UK) Acclaim	SP27	73% Non-mode 7 racer! Nigel Mansell! Dagen Haas? Pretty good sim of Formula One's boring US cousin.
NHL '94	(UK) E/Arts/Ocean	SP22	89% For some reasons, ice hockey is one of the easiest sports to make into a playable game, something this game proves ably.
NHL '96	(UK) E/Arts	SP37	90% *NHL* gets better every year, but this isn't a viable replacement for *NHL '95* owners.
NHL Stanley Cup	(US) Nintendo	SP18	79% Before doing *Doom* for Williams, Sculptured did this Mode 7-mad ice hockey sim for Nintendo. And it ain't bad.
Nosferatu	(JAP) Seika	SP27	75% The banana peel was replaced with a severe lack of originality. The game still tripped over it.
Obelix	(UK) Infogrames	SP36	60% Average. Run-of-the-mill. Boring. Flawed. True to the looks of the original *Asterix* books, enlivened by okay sub-games
Operation Europe	(US) Koei	SP24	46% If you bought your SNES to play wargames then you might squeeze something out of this. Don't bother otherwise.
Ogre Battle	(US) Enix	SP34	80% A fantasy strategy game that's fun if not altogether varied, but employs a solid real-time feature.
Pac-Attack	(UK) Namco/Nintendo	SP21	69% It didn't take long for the *Puyo Puyo* clones to begin arriving and this is a spot-on example of how to not get it quite right.
Pac-Man 2	(US) Namco	SP35	70% A frustrating, picky platform game that's nearly good enough to get away with it.
The Pagemaster	(UK) Virgin	SP29	61% Oh please, someone mess up that Culkin kid's face. Speccy kid with books in pointless platformer.
Phantom 2040	(UK) Viacom	SP38	78% Pacing, storyline and depth drag this licence platformer out of the 60% band.
Pac-Man 2	(US) Namco	SP35	70% A frustrating, picky platform game that's nearly good enough to get away with it.
Pinball Dreams	(UK) Gametek	SP18	75% What should have been a greatly-improved version of the Amiga hit turned out to be shoddily implemented and flawed.
Pinball Dreams	(UK) Tecmagik	SP17	76% What should have been a greatly-improved version of the Amiga hit turned out to be shoddily implemented and flawed.
Pink Goes To Hollywood	(UK) Activision	SP27	79% A bit of a mystery release, this, considering The Pink Panther went out with flares (again). Lightweight, floaty platform fun.
Power Drive	(US) US Gold	SP28	69% A bad Amiga mini-racing game makes its way to the SNES. Nobody cheers.
Pac-Man 2	(US) Namco	SP35	70% A frustrating, picky platform game that's nearly good enough to get away with it.
Populous 2	(UK) Imagineer	SP23	87% What is it with Imagineer and God-type games? Another of those Great-If-You-Like-That-Sort-Of-Thing™s.
Primal Rage	(UK) T/Warner	SP36	60% An average conversion of an average arcade beat-'em-up. With big dinosaurs.
Putty Squad	(UK) Ocean	SP32	89% Be like this, other platform games. Being, literally, putty, your character can do things other platform heroes can't.
Puzzle Bobble	(JAP) Taito	SP34	84% Like all great puzzle games this is a simple idea which is especially fun in two-player mode.
Ren and Stimpy Time Warp	(UK) THQ	SP28	51% Say this: "Steeempy, you eediot! You wrote a dull scrolling beeeat-'em-up!" and avoid this awful offering.
Raccoon Rascal	(JAP) NCS/Masiya	SP21	79% Obscure puzzler starring arguably the cutest critter to ever appear in a game. Especially fun in two-player mode.
Rainbow Bell Adventures	(UK) Konami	SP18	70% The score's perhaps a little harsh on this distinctive two-player platformer, but it's nonetheless below-par Konami.

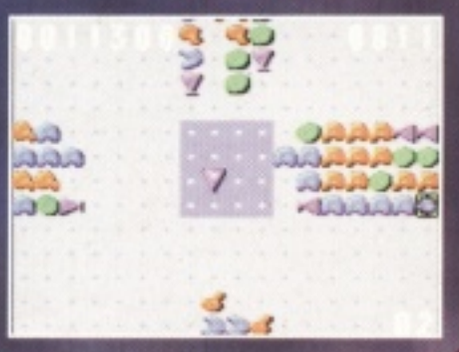


NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Ranma 1/2: Hard Battle	(JAP) Rumic Soft	SP21	79% All the *Ranma* faves are present in what proves to be a rewarding beat-'em-up. Still some way short of *SFII*, mind.
Rise of the Phoenix	(US) Koei	SP32	46% A trudging historical battle strategy game that's inaccurate historically and as a representation of war strategies.
Rise of the Robots	(UK) Acclaim	SP29	33% One of the most expensive, over-hyped disappointments since, erm, the last one. Over-rated at 33%.
Robotrek	(US) Enix	SP31	72% A polished but unoriginal RPG, just like too many games to come out of Enix. The robot-manufacturing bit is clever.
Romance of the 3 Kingdoms III	(US) Koei	SP20	67% And still the Zyster played insipid Koei wargames, finding this particular example suited solely to hardcore anorak fans.
Romance Of The 3 Kingdoms V	(US) Koei	SP37	68% Armchair anorak strategy that could be a lot better and frankly involves little romance.
Samurai Spirits	(JAP) Takara	SP28	84% A beat-'em-up that isn't quite as diverse as you'd expect from a 24meg game.
Sea Quest DSV	(UK) THQ	SP30	74% A shoot-cum-swim-cum-budget-'em-up. Though underwater thrills may work okay on the telly, they don't here.
Secret of Evermore	Square	SP39	81% A fine action RPG whose faults come horribly to light if you've played *Mana*.
Sink or Swim	(UK) Titus	SP31	55% Repetitive *Lemmings*-style save-'em-up that's about as interesting as a Sunday afternoon on the Mary Celeste.
Smash Ball	(JAP) Charactersoft	SP23	82% "The Surprise Two-Player *Breakout* Clone Hit Of '95!" as our pals on *TOTAL!* might say. This is a fabby little thing.
The Smurfs	(UK) Infogrames	SP25	80% Challenging platform game stuffed to overflowing with little scary blue people who smile too much.
Soccer Kid	(UK) Ocean	S18	84% A daft idea it might be, but this is entertaining stuff (despite looking like so many typical Amiga games of the day).
Soccer Shootout	(US) Capcom	SP24	80% While hardly mouldbresaking, the Western version of *Excite Stage '94* is a playable silicon take on The Beautiful Game.
Soldiers of Fortune	(US) Spectrum Holobyte	SP18	89% Zy thinks this is fabbage, while Tony believes it to be nothing special at all. Essentially it's *Gauntlet* for the '90s.
Space Ace	(UK) Empire	SP17	58% Oh dear, another game that got us into 'trouble' because we gave it a mediocre score. Sorry, Empire, but this is nobby.
Space Invaders	(JAP) Taito	SP21	40% *Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders. Space Invaders.*
Sparkster	(UK) Konami	SP25	89% It's an original, imaginative, entertaining, and fun platformer. Blimey!
Spectre	(UK) Gametek	SP21	90% Horrendously overrated (even EMAP mags slagged it off) two-player polygonised tank combat game. 72% more like!
Speed Racer	(UK) Accolade	SP22	65% Did we ever tell you about the difficulty we had getting a review copy from Accolade? Were they scared of us?.
Spiderman	(UK) Acclaim	SP31	77% A rather linear but pleasing platformer featuring our arachnid ally.
Spiderman & The X-Men	(UK) Acclaim	S22	72% Tatty-looking platform beat-'em-up which fails to make best use of those soupy Marvel characters.
Spike McFang	(US) Bulletproof	SP24	82% Call us suckers for invention, but we couldn't resist Spike and his hat-luzzing action RPG antics, however short-lived.
Sports Illustrated Championship	(US) Malibu	SP19	70% This two-games-on-one-cart (American footy and baseball) package was a nice idea, but poorly realised.
Star Trek Bridge Sim	(UK) Interplay	SP29	77% A stunted, unenjoyable Trekker game, with the saving grace of being fairly well executed.
Star Trek: The Next Generation	(US) Spectrum Holobyte	SP21	39% Lots of pitiful subgames cobbled together to form something that even the saddest Trekker would struggle to enjoy.
Stargate	(UK) Acclaim	SP32	60% Good films make mediocre games. Atrocious films make... oh dear.
Street Racer	(UK) Ubi-Soft	SP25	91% A *Mario Kart*-style racer that pips its predecessor to the post. Odd split-screen four-player mode.
Super Battletank 2	(US) Absolute	SP19	43% Military hardware fetishist Cam Winstanley reviewed this in *Super Play* and even he was distinctly non-plussed with it.
Super Bomberman 3	(UK) Virgin	SP37	89% Excellent new multi-player and single-player touches keep The Most Addictive Game Ever™ going strong.
Super Chase HQ	(JAP) Taito	SP19	55% Loosely based on the coin-op of a similar name, this is strictly Mode 7 racing by numbers. Hugely disappointing stuff.
Super Cup Soccer 2	(JAP) Jaleco	SP19	60% If we had a tenner for all the weak footy games like this, we'd be at the pub now, not writing about them.
Super Drift Out	(JAP) Visco	SP34	45% An overhead racing game that, despite a course designer, is much too dull.
Super Dropzone	(UK) Eurocom	SP26	87% It's *Defender* all over again! Actually, it's *Dropzone* all over again, but that all amounts to the same thing.
Super Godzilla	(UK) Toho	SP25	39% Dreadful and boring stomp-'em-up. Destroy cities. Fight monsters. Don't buy this game.
Super Ice Hockey	(UK) Sunsoft	SP24	55% Like so many 'Super'-suffixed games, this fails to do the term any justice. But then *Average Ice Hockey* would be a bit silly.
Super International Cricket	(UK) Nintendo	SP33	77% That obvious problem of cricket not working on a computer shines through.
Super Metroid	(UK) Nintendo	SP20	92% This is the reason Gumpei Yokoi still holds his head high after the disappointing Vitual Boy. Buy this game. Buy two copies.
Super Morph	(UK) Sony	SP30	86% Intriguing puzzle-orientated fun straight from the Amiga. The hero morphs between states in a platform adventure.
Super Ninja Kun	(JAP) Jaleco	SP25	68% A pretty, occasionally enjoyable game that plays like the Encyclopedia Britannica.

NAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE/DESCRIPTION
Super Pinball: Behind The Mask	(JAP) Meldac	SP19	73% "Tony, would you like to review this nice-looking but dull pinball sim?" "No, but no other bugger's going to...".
Super Punch Out!!	(UK) Nintendo	SP27	90% Original and surprisingly top boxing game! Cartoony looks and plenty of skills needed to overcome a variety of opponents.
Super Return of the Jedi	(UK) JVC	SP30	79% A huge but repetitive platformer just like so many others. Despite faithful graphics the film's atmosphere isn't recreated.
Super Street Fighter II	(JAP) Capcom	SP23	96% Although most SNES-owning hardcore *SF* enthusiasts prefer *Turbo*, this remains one hell of a beat-'em-up.
Super Troll Islands	(UK) Gametek	SP20	70% The idea's pretty straightforward – colour in the platform backdrops – the graphics are cacky. Overall it's basic gaming.
Super Turrican	(UK) Ocean	SP31	84% A short journey into the depths of a classic floppy title, with more besides.
Suzuka 8 Hours	(JAP) Namcot	SP19	59% Without the sit-on bikes of the coin-op, but *with* some horribly unwelcoming gameplay, this is best left alone.
Syndicate	(UK) Ocean	SP26	80% Unfortunately it's been cut down for the SNES, but it's still the isometric strategy game of the gods.
T2: Judgement Day	(UK) Acclaim/LJN	SP19	52% The only SNES game with a naked Arnie sprite – but hardly worthy of attention because of it, we hope you'll agree.
TAO Batman & Robin	(UK) Konami	SP25	80% A haphazard mish-mash of gaming styles that only just come together.
TAO Mighty Max	(UK) Sony	SP28	83% Cartoon licence and a youngster in a baseball cap make for... a surprisingly good strategy platformer.
Tetris Battle Gaiden	(JAP) Bullet Proof	SP18	86% Excellent reworking of the *Tetris* concept with magic spells, cute characters, the lot. Sterling straight *Tetris* mode, too.
Theme Park	(UK) Ocean	SP32	91% An excellent management sim from Bullfrog. Tough to get into but ultimately massively rewarding.
Time Cop	(UK) JVC	SP34	15% Appalling platform drudgery with no trace of gameplay. Flawed in every respect and kicked deservedly in by our Zy.
Time Trax	(UK) Malibu/T•HQ	SP20	73% Arriving at a time when T•HQ's rep was at an all-time low, this was a minor revelation for them. Not bad at all.
Tin Star	(US) Nintendo	SP33	61% A set of varied game styles building a rather linear, boring western. Not one we'd recommend.
Tintin In Tibet	Infogrames	SP39	25% Super-faithful graphics meet gameplay of the pumpular persuasion to grim effect.
Tiny Toons Wild & Wacky Sports	(UK) Konami	SP25	78% *Track And Field* 'update' for up to five players which only comes alive with that full player quota, frustratingly.
Troy Aikman NFL Football	(UK) E/Arts	SP26	77% If you know nothing about American footy, you're doomed to fail. No, at life in general.
True Lies	(UK) Acclaim	SP30	74% A carelessly-planned *Smash TV*-viewed explorer. Plenty of Arnie-esque blasting, but it's all a bit predictable.
Turbo Toons	(UK) Empire	SP36	42% Repetitive licence racing abound. There are no cars, just cartoon characters trundling and weaving, dalek-style.
Turn And Burn	(US) Accolade	SP20	71% Neat presentation fails to hide what is essentially a paper-thin flight sim/shoot-'em-up hybrid.
Ultima VI	(US) FCI	SP22	45% The Ultima series may be big on the PC, but this instalment made us gag. Notable for its odd, skewed overhead perspective.
Ultimate Parodius	(UK) Konami	SP27	85% A tribute to the original *Parodius*, though it doesn't show too many improvements.
Unirally	(UK) Nintendo	SP29	85% Acclaimed by everyone (Pope included), but unfortunately not as close to Godliness as his Holiness suggests.
Urban Strike	T•HQ	SP39	75% Retains that fine *Strike* playability but with clunky scrolling and stop-start gameplay.
Vortex	(UK) Sony	SP26	90% Super FX transforming battle-suit destruction makes for some of the best fun you can have with a torpedo.
Warlock	(UK) Acclaim	SP31	68% A bog-standard platformer, relying on spells to give it that vital spark. And they don't.
WeaponLord	(UK) Ocean	SP36	75% A below-par Street Fighter II crib with, believe it or not, some weapons but obviously no gore.
Wildsnake	(US) S/Holobyte	SP29	70% *Tetris*-inspired drop-'em-down puzzler with snakes of various lengths and colours.
Wolfenstein 3D	(UK) Imagineer	SP17	78% Before *Doom* – but on the SNES there was this: its simplistic forebear which offered absorbing, if short-lived, gameplay
World Heroes 2	(JAP) Takara	SP22	80% Takara have another bash at beating SFII and come off quite respectably. The feel's not quite right but it's smile-worthy.
Wolverine – Adamantium Rage	(UK) Acclaim	SP29	60% Apart from the brilliantly animated main sprite,there's absolutely nothing that distinguishes it at all.
World Masters Golf	(UK) Virgin	SP35	80% By no means perfect, but your best bet for golf on the SNES. Looks are acceptable and controls surprisingly pleasant.
WWF Raw	(UK) Acclaim	SP27	84% Theatrical WWF violence with knobs on, beating Royal Rumble. It's still all a bit silly, though.
WWF Wrestlemania	(UK) Acclaim	SP38	84% An amusing, if vaguely repetitive grappler. Only six WWF stars but plenty of silly moves.
X_Kaliber 2097	(US) ACtivision	SP20	68% Platform hack-'em-up most memorable for its 'real band' music (it's pumpy) and a villain by the name of Spuke.
X-Men Apocalypse	(JAP) Capcom	SP29	52% SNES rule 183: All *X-Men* games are humdrum, horizontally-scrolling beat-'em-ups. Alphabetical order, mind.
Yoshi's Island	(JAP) Nintendo	SP36	94% Yoshi takes the lead in what at first appears to be the best *Mario* game yet. It's certainly close between this and *SMW*.
Zoku: The Legend Of Bishin	(JAP) Magifact	SP19	58% The idea's fab (drive somewhere and have a big fight), but the driving bit is confusing and the fighting horribly limited.







SUPER PLAYER'S GUIDE

DOOM

PART FOUR
THE SECRET LEVELS
Ocean (US/UK)
By Zy Nicholson

The final chapter of our *Doom* guide dissects the Secret Levels... and blimey, they're a bit harsh.

The bonus levels found in *Doom*'s three episodes contain some of the most deadly encounters in the entire game. They aren't for perfectionists:

you're likely to suffer major damage, especially if you left the previous levels with little or no armour. But hey – you knew the risks when you stepped into the secret exit booth, so welcome to the scenic route through Hell...

NEW MAPS OF HELL

Since this guide started I've had a few letters from intrigued players trying to reach the missing levels. It seems a rival magazine has shoddily reprinted an old guide for the PC game and tried to pass it off as a guide for the SNES version, despite many subtle but important differences. To avoid any confusion, here is the definitive list of levels in the order they appear.

KNEE-DEEP IN THE DEAD
The Hangar
The Nuclear Plant
The Toxin Refinery
Military Base (secret level)
Command Control
Phobos Lab
Computer Station
Phobos Anomaly
(No Central Processing)

THE SHORES OF HELL
Deimos Anomaly
Refinery
Fortress of Mystery (secret level)
Deimos Lab
Halls of the Damned
Tower of Babel
(No Containment Area, Command Centre or Spawning Vats)

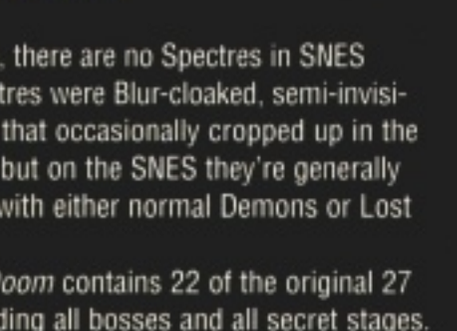
INFERNO
Hell Keep
Slough of Despair
Pandemonium
House of Pain
Mount Erebus
Warrens (secret level)
Limbo
Dis
(No Unholy Cathedral)

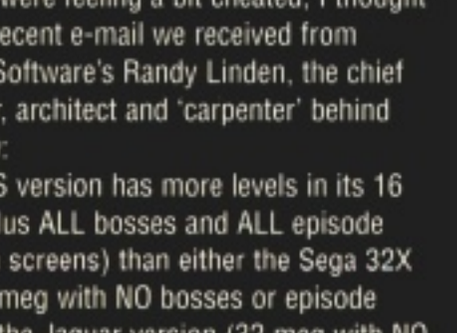
Furthermore, there are no Spectres in SNES *Doom*. Spectres were Blur-cloaked, semi-invisible Demons that occasionally cropped up in the PC original, but on the SNES they're generally substituted with either normal Demons or Lost Souls.

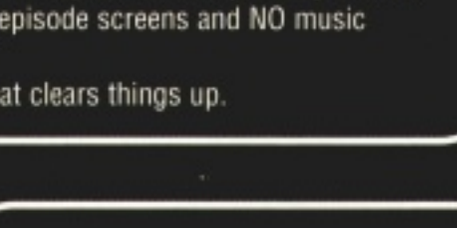
SNES *Doom* contains 22 of the original 27 levels, including all bosses and all secret stages. In case you were feeling a bit cheated, I thought I'd quote a recent e-mail we received from Sculptured Software's Randy Linden, the chief programmer, architect and 'carpenter' behind SNES *Doom*:

"... the SNES version has more levels in its 16 megabits (plus ALL bosses and ALL episode intermission screens) than either the Sega 32X version (24 meg with NO bosses or episode screens) or the Jaguar version (32 meg with NO bosses, NO episode screens and NO music either!)."

Hope that clears things up.







FINAL TIPS

- All three of the secret levels give you the chance to collect a Rocket Launcher and boxes of rockets, but using them isn't quite as simple as you might have thought. If you know that a large group of monsters is waiting around a corner but you can't see them, try aiming a rocket at the far wall, as close to the corner as possible. If you're lucky, the blast radius may be enough to wipe them out completely, or, failing that, it may provoke some of them to wander from their ambush point into the sight of your gun.
- Monsters suffer from a kind of Sticky Wall Syndrome too. Take advantage of their programming which prevents them walking off a ledge. You can occasionally trap them in half-closed doors or on top of rising walls (Warrens, Hell Keep and Limbo are prime locations).
- All monsters have a limited range of perception, including bosses. When you take the first teleport in Deimos Lab, for instance, the Imps at the far end of the hall cannot detect you and you're free to pick them off with a shotgun. Take one step forward, however, and they'll open fire. Shooting at a creature without destroying it will often blow your cover (especially if you're Blurred).
- Judicious use of the Pause button will let you switch weapons, then hold down the buttons to run backwards, as soon as you've fired a rocket. Don't be afraid to suspend the action for a second to find something more appropriate.
- An oddity of the varying difficulty grade is that some areas only rarely have monsters. For example, the cubbyholes on the steps to the Marine's Hall of Mt. Erebus are often missing their Imp guards. It just adds to the paranoia, fortunately (try returning to the lowest difficulty after playing Nightmare to see what I mean).

...DE

PART FOUR
THE SECRET LEVELS
Ocean (US/UK)
By Zy Nicholson

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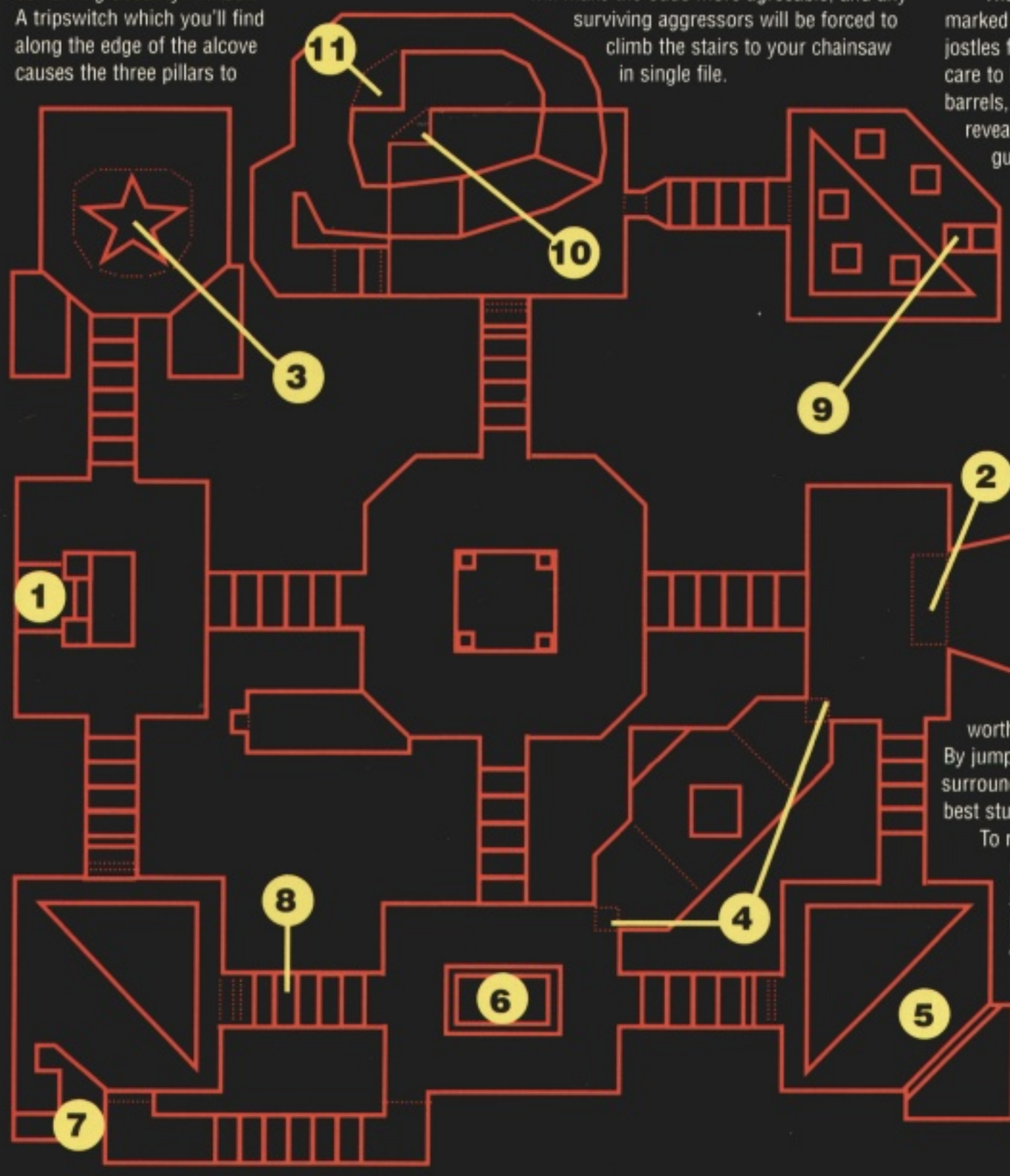
MILITARY BASE

Checklist: 1 Rocket Launcher, 1 Chain Gun, 1 Chainsaw, 1 Shotgun, 1 Security Armour, 1 Backpack

To complete this level you must find all three keys in the order of yellow (1), red (5) and blue (6). However, I advise clearing and securing all freely accessible areas before you open any doors. The layout of the base makes it easy for the occupying soldiers to shoot you in the back.

Protection is essential, so you might find platform (2) useful: it drops you into a courtyard, where a green slime pool isolates an alcove containing Security Armour. A tripswitch which you'll find along the edge of the alcove causes the three pillars to sink, allowing you to run across them as stepping stones on your return.

Standing in the 'pentacle' (3) genuinely summons Demons: it's one big tripswitch, and the second you step on it you'll be overwhelmed as they charge out from their secret lairs. So edge around the walls of the chamber, stand on the far side and run across it, making your way back up the stairs. A Rocket or Chain Gun fired from the relative safety of the spacious open room above will make the odds more agreeable, and any surviving aggressors will be forced to climb the stairs to your chainsaw in single file.



The corners of these rooms (4) are elevator columns that automatically drop you into a slime pool containing Chain Gun ammo. To evacuate, approach either of the corner columns and they will sink to collect you. Slowly.

The room with the red key has a number of well-placed barrels ready to detonate. However, be prepared for a second wave of monsters to appear from behind the wall (5) when you hit the tripswitch surrounding the red key.

The blue key sits inside a walled enclosure marked by four burning torch-stands (6), where it jostles for space with more Demons than you'd care to know. The switch at (7), protected by four barrels, will remove the enclosure – as well as revealing a side passage of nice things for your guns (8). Destroy the Demons before they wander off.

Sorry, but there isn't a lever to lower all the pillars in this secret room (9). Instead, a trip-switch on the lowest step operates an elevator platform on the far side (you'll have to dash and weave to stand on it in time). Once elevated, the theory is that you run from pillar to pillar, moving anti-clockwise, to collect all the treasures on top. Lining yourself up with the automap helps, although you might wonder if it's really worth the effort: I've never managed it, frankly. By jumping straight from the high pillar to the surrounding ones, over and over, you can get the best stuff more easily.

To raise a bridge to the exit point (10) you need to throw a lever at (11), so a long jaunt through the trench of toxic ooze is unavoidable. It's guarded, of course, and the only way back up is through a concealed door further down the tunnel. Lean out from your corner to hit the tripswitch and see it open. When you hit what appears to be a dead end, press A and an elevator will drop to collect you. At the top is a secret door to let you back into the exit room.

FORTRESS OF MYSTERY

Checklist: 1 Plasma Rifle, 1 Rocket Launcher, 1 Chain Gun, 1 Chainsaw, 1 Shotgun, 1 Combat Armour, 1 Soul Sphere, 1 Backpack, 1 Computer Map

The very instant this level begins, run straight forward and laugh at the fireball crossfire death you just avoided. Having reached this Fortress via the secret exit in the Refinery, you should now have a Plasma Rifle (1) with a few hundred energy units in the battery; more than enough to strafe the Barons of Hell heading for the narrow entrance of your alcove.

One of the 'petals' of this flower formation contains a Computer Map (2), and from here onwards it's just a case of individually drawing out the Cacodaemons from the next room and rocketing them from a healthy distance. The secret door to the exit booth is clearly marked on your map, and collecting the three keys in order shouldn't present a problem once you've pressed the skull switch at (3). Played correctly, you should be able to leave this level with 200% Health, 200% Armour, a complete weapon inventory and a truckload of ammunition.

YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE

Think you're pretty good, don't you? Been there, blasted that, survived without a scratch. Think you've got what it takes to accept the final challenge?

SNES *Doom*'s difficulty grade varies if you finish one episode and begin another. To play the hardest game, you need to set the difficulty to Nightmare and start again from the very first episode, Knee-deep in the Dead, and then play through all three episodes. If you manage to reach Inferno in this way – and it takes some doing – the monster placement is sometimes different than if you had skipped straight to Inferno after selecting Ultra Violence or Nightmare.

Specifically, this means more monsters, upgraded monsters (Demons in certain areas may become Cacodaemons), and even a few extra Barons of Hell thrown in for good measure. All monsters increase in speed and aggressiveness too: Demons charge like speeding trains and are not so easily stopped with a couple of casual shotgun blasts, while Lost Souls will do their damnedest [*oh-ho – Ed*] to get right behind you.

I ought to warn you that it took me a few hours to finish the game in this way. Still no end sequence for your troubles, alas, but even the PC version had little more than a static picture. No great loss, then.

WARRENS

Checklist: 1 BFG9000, 1 Plasma Rifle, 1 Rocket Launcher, 1 Chain Gun, 1 Chainsaw, 1 Shotgun, 1 Security Armour, 2 Rad Suits, 2 Soul Spheres, 1 Berserk Pack, 1 Blur Artifact, 2 Invulnerability Artifacts

Déjà vu? Arriving here for the first time, you might start to suspect that Hell has messed with your mind once too often. This secret stage plays exactly like Inferno's first level, Hell Keep, right up to the point where you try to leave the level. But as soon as you step into the 'exit teleport', you will instead activate a tripswitch that changes the layout of the entire area.

At least ammunition isn't a scarce resource this time around. Your most immediate concern is the Cyberdemon lurking behind the three green blocks. Blur and Invulnerability Artifacts (1) in the corners should give you an edge. Keep your eyes peeled and you'll also find enough rockets to obliterate a small rural parish, although the BFG9000 might get the job done quicker.

After this it goes from bad to worse. As you retrace your steps back through the level, you'll discover that same tripswitch has opened more secret doors, removed walls and unleashed countless hellspawn in places that you thought were secure. Step back into the imp chamber and the side partition (2) can no longer contain its Cacodaemon prisoners.

The next room has been expanded to include a blood-red ooze pool, patrolled by a Baron of Hell: a Chaingun, Berserk Pack and Rad Suit are hidden around a corner, beyond the ooze (3).

The switch on the end of the wall at (4) brings the goods on top into reach, not to mention releasing a horde of demons on the far side of the yard. If you couldn't reach the Chainsaw at Mt. Erebus, here it is.

The Plasma Rifle can be found on your return route, heavily guarded (5). A BFG9000 and Rad Suit sit there waiting for you in the escape route from the bloodpool at (6).

The first main courtyard now has two extra features: an exit booth protected by a red security door (7), and there's also a new passage leading off to the east. The first time you step into (8) you'll inevitably trigger a once-only, one-way hidden teleport that reassembles your hapless body at (9). Unless you're prepared for the Cacodaemon welcoming committee at the other end, and have saved an Invulnerability Artifact for this moment, it may all end here.

The red key now sparkles at the end of the barracks ahead of you, though it should come as no surprise when you learn that it's booby-trapped. The platform on which it rests (10) is a tripswitch that causes the wall imprisoning a Baron of Hell to drop away. But don't think that's the end of it: if you dispose of him and move in to retrieve the bulk cell in his hiding place you'll trigger the release of more Barons eager to give you the same treatment. Take your Soul Sphere with the assurance of having earned it.

Well, that's all the information UAC and Planetary Ops can offer. Looks like you're on your own now – unless you count that friend in your holster – so keep your head down and remember your training. Final orders are Priority Red A1: make sure no TZZT follow you ZZZT portal when you finally TZZZZT [transmission break-up. Message ends].

SNES TECH & GAMING ANSWERS

GAMEFREAK

By Tony Mott

Videogaming has often been called less a hobby, more a way of life. And for every way of life you need guidance. Let us be thankful, then, that it's available in the form of star of stage, screen and magic lantern, the world-reknowned, critically acclaimed Gamefreak. (*Aw, shucks... – GF*)

From Marcus Sampson, Ipswich, Suffolk:
Q How do I get hold of computer music CDs such as *Donkey Kong Country Go Ape* and *Secret Of Mana*?
A I don't believe *DKC Go Ape* was made available separately so you'll have to get hunting. Regarding a *Secret Of Mana* CD, well, that'll prove even trickier. It's getting on a bit now – have you thought about putting a wanted ad in Supermarket?
Q Is there any way I can record game endings on to video?
A Yep, you can chuck your RF cable straight into your vid and do it that way. Obviously you won't be able to see what's coming out of the SNES, though, so you should get hold of an RF splitter box/cable – try Tandy.
Q Is *Stargate* any good? (I loved the film.)
A Not really. It's another production-line platform shoot-'em-up. (I thought the film was pumpatronic, incidentally.)
Q I'm a little confused. Is *Super Mario RPG* on the SNES or N64?
A It's most definitely a SNES game. You've been reading too much *Total!*, mate.
Q Is Luwidge in it?
A Hmm, might this be a distant relative of Luigi? Because I can tell you about Mario's brother: apparently Nintendo didn't want two very similar characters appearing in the game together so he'll make only a cameo appearance at most.

Stargate: whiffy film, pretty whiffy game, frankly.

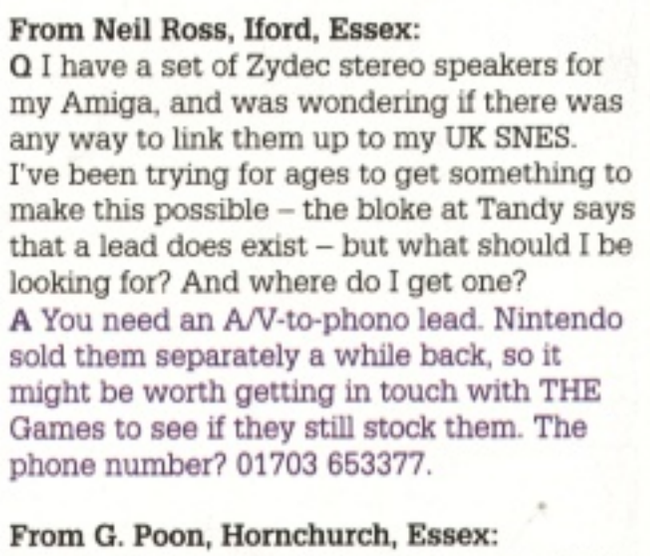
From Alistair Stewart, South Shields:
Q We've seen 8-bit, 16-bit, 32-bit and now 64-bit machines. Is there an end to the amount of bits that can be contained in a console and if so, what graphics can we expect from this limit?
A Right, you'll have to bear with me for a bit with this one, 'cos it's a bit complicated.

It's all a question of size. To accomodate more bits in a chip (an increase from 32- to 64-bit, for example), the die size (the physical space that the chip occupies) must increase. This is bad news in itself because it's harder to manufacture larger dies as efficiently, as you immediately introduce more room for errors in transistors, as well as obviously being more expensive. Also the larger the chip, the more heat it generates – not good news either. As technology progresses, however, it becomes possible to pack the same number of transistors in a smaller area, so they run at a cooler temperature. It's therefore possible to squeeze more speed out of them.

What this all adds up to is that it's now pretty easy to make 64-bit chips cheaply, and there are already 128-bit graphics cards available for high-end PCs. It's reckoned that processor power doubles something like every 18 months – usually a progression achieved by simply cramming more transistors onto a chip. Although bods like Clive Sinclair (yes, *the* Clive 'Speccy' Sinclair) are experimenting with completely new processing technologies (using x-rays, for example), it's likely that manufacturers will be content with following the 64-128-256 progression and concentrate on how machines operates internally.

So it's safe to assume that, yes, a 128-bit console will turn up somewhere along the line.

Right, hope that's all clear(ish). Let's have a look at your less open-ended questions...
Q I have suddenly seen the light on RPGs after playing *Secret Of Mana*, so what is the best one you can recommend for me that is not too tedious or difficult and has great graphics and gameplay?
A First let's make it clear that you'll not see another *Mana*, but there are a few notable action-led efforts around, namely *Zelda III* and *Illusion Of Time*. (This is, incidentally, absolutely the last time I answer this one.)



Secret Of Mana: two years old and still there's no action RPG available in the West to come close.

Q I am thinking about buying an Ultra 64 when it comes out. Are they any decent flight sims and racing games coming out?
A You'll be wanting *PilotWings* and *Wave Race 64* – both look knockaht, 'Arry.

From Neil Ross, Iford, Essex:
Q I have a set of Zydec stereo speakers for my Amiga, and was wondering if there was any way to link them up to my UK SNES. I've been trying for ages to get something to make this possible – the bloke at Tandy says that a lead does exist – but what should I be looking for? And where do I get one?
A You need an A/V-to-phono lead. Nintendo sold them separately a while back, so it might be worth getting in touch with THE Games to see if they still stock them. The phone number? 01703 653377.

From G. Poon, Hornchurch, Essex:
Q Will there be different kinds of Ultra 64 for different countries?
A Yes, it'll be called Nintendo 64 in Japan but Ultra 64 everywhere else, although the shape of the unit itself will remain the same.
Q How much will the Ultra 64 cost when it's officially released?
A It's looking like £250 (with a game) or £199 (no game).
Q Why doesn't the Nintendo Hotline deal with US games?
A Because you're not supposed to play US games outside of the US. You could always try phoning their game counsellers in the States, of course...

Q Which RPG should I get next and where can I get it? I already have *FF*, *FFII*, *Mana*, *BOF*, *Soulblazer*, *Gaia*, *Y's III*, *Brain Lord*, *Drakkhen*, *Mystical Ninja* and *Zelda*.
A *Breath Of Fire 2*; a good importer such as Dream Machines 2. (This really is the last RPG question I answer.)
Q Is there going to be a sequel to *Shadowrun* on the SNES or Ultra 64 because at the end of the original Drake says he will see you again in *Shadowrun 2*?
A Hold it right there... [Pause.] Right, I've just attempted to contact *Shadowrun*'s creators, Beam Software, in Australia, to ask what's going on with the promised sequel, but their phone and fax lines appear to be permanently engaged. I'll try to find out what's going on for next month, but bear in mind that they're into doing stuff like *International Cricket* nowadays, so a cyberpunk RPG sequel might be doubtful.

From Gareth Winchester, Blackburn:
Q When is *Yoshi's Island* coming out over here, and how much will it cost? (I played it in America and thought it was excellent).
A It should be out right now, joining *Diddy's Kong Quest* on game stockists' shelves. I believe its RRP is £54.99, but it'll no doubt be discounted by some of the larger chains.
Q Why are SNES games dearer then Mega Drive games?
A I doubt *anyone* could give you a straight answer to this old chestnut, to be honest.
Q What are you favourite SNES games at the moment?
A *Tenchi So-Zo*, *Earthbound* (still) and *Wrestling With Wil For A Joypad* (very popular on *Super Play*, this one).
Q Why did Nintendo sack all of their UK-based staff?
A They didn't. When THE took over naturally there was a certain amount of staff sheddage in the form of redundancies, but there's still a strong core of original Nintendo employess working there.

From Nicholas Reynolds, Woking, Surrey:
Q I am thinking of getting *Killer Instinct* or *Mortal Kombat 3* soon but I don't know which is the better to get. I looked in issue 36 at *KI* but you only gave it 85%.
A "Only"? *"Only"*? 85% is a topper score by our standards. Listen, in case you hadn't noticed we don't review games the same way as our 'competitors'. We don't tell you games are 'okay if you like this sort of thing' or call them average only you promptly hand out a score of 80-odd per cent, 'cos frankly that's just taking the pi– (*Snip! – Ed*)

MK3: better than *Killer Instinct*? Or worse? Or about the same? Or is it actually all subjective? Groan.

AN APOLOGY

When I mentioned *Role Call*'s switchable 50-60Hz conversion service back in issue 37 I said there was no guarantee given on the work undertaken. Well apparently I was wrong: there is. You can get full details from *Role Call* editor Rachel Ryan on 01925 490910.

Which is best – *KI* or *MK3*, huh? Decide which coin-op you prefer? Done that? You've got your answer, it's that simple.

From Marcus Sampson, Ipswich, Suffolk:
Q I've just seen a clip from Disney's *Toy Story* and noticed that a game of the film is coming out for the Mega Drive. Will we ever see it on the SNES? It looks ace.
A Yes, John Lassater and his Industrial Light & Magic chums certainly look like they've still got the magic touch. As far as the game goes I gather Disney's newish software arm have indeed got a SNES version in the works (being programmed by Traveller's Tales, the UK outfit behind the technically excellent *Micky Mania*). I'll try to dig up a full preview for next month.
Q Are there any shoot-'em-ups currently in the works for the SNES?
A Not many, and certainly not any due for release in the UK (unless you count *Starfox 2*, which I gather has been resurrected for '96). You could try *Parodius 3*, which should be around on import now.

ANY QUESTIONS?

If they don't concern anime or which RPGs are any good, send them to this address:

Gamefreak, *Super Play*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

DAYDREAMING

Well here we are again. It's all different now, of course, 'cos it looks like Shigs has indeed been reading this column over the last three years, what with the Ultra 64 getting the three games which have most commonly been the theme of your daydreams: 64-bit versions of *Zelda*, *Mario Kart* and *PilotWings*. So you'll have to find something else to fantasise about, just like Carl Pike of West Sussex has:

"My ideal game would be an Ultra 64 update of the old Amiga game *Hunter*, but with graphics like those of *Sega Rally*. It'd be set in an earth-like environment with buildings and other ground features and a rolling landscape of hills, lakes and pathways. You could drive absolutely anywhere you like and there'd be a real-time clock which would mean that you'd play a lot of the game at night using just your car's headlights in order to guide you."

Mmm, sounds pretty funky, but why stop with the vehicles from *Hunter*? How about being able to blap around in a motorbike-and-sidecar? Or one of those snowmobiles out of *Die Hard 2*? Jetskis? That'd be more like it – a *PilotWings* on land, or something.

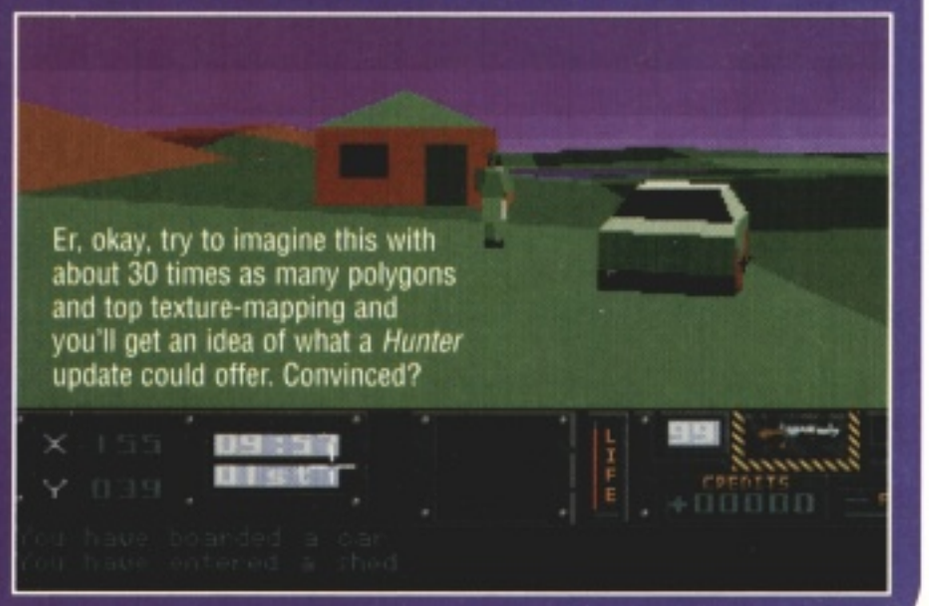
The next effort comes from David Thomson, via the Internet:

"My daydream would be a version of *Doom* set in an abandoned town. There are a number of people and the last one standing is the winner. You could hide in hospitals waiting to ambush injured men or snipe them from the rooftops. Playing in this multiplayer environment would be great. There'd be different types of buildings and you could plant mines to blow people up. There would be pitched battles in the streets, hiding behind cars and outside toilets. You would choose from a selection of weapons at the beginning of the game depending on which character you picked, and you'd stick with these weapons throughout the game. It's as simple as that."

Yeah, not bad. Chris Williams from Derby is next up:

"I'd like to see a beat-'em-up which has more realism than any other. When you hit your opponent, for example, you would actually see their face being smashed in, and there'd be blood and bruises that would stay on their bodies until they die. With the addition of weapons you'd also be able to cut off the other fighter's arms and legs but without killing them..."

Er, yes, I think that's quite enough for this month. If you want to spill the contents of your heads all over my pages, send your Daydreams to the address over there. I've got some juicy little carts waiting here in my drawer to send to the best ones...



Er, okay, try to imagine this with about 30 times as many polygons and top texture-mapping and you'll get an idea of what a *Hunter* update could offer. Convinced?

MODE 7

By ZY NICHOLSON

CALLING ALL CHEATS, CRACKERS, AND GAME-FREAKS!

You've done us proud this month: brand new and original cheats for our past three cover games grace this column. Still, there is no room or time for complacency. Help restore creamy old Mode 7 to its former glory by writing to *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. You should mark your envelope 'Mode 7' if submitting tips or 'Don't Ask Allan' if asking game questions. Yes yes yes, I know, they all get to me in the end – but I have to wear different hats for each job, you see.

YOSHI'S ISLAND

(Nintendo)

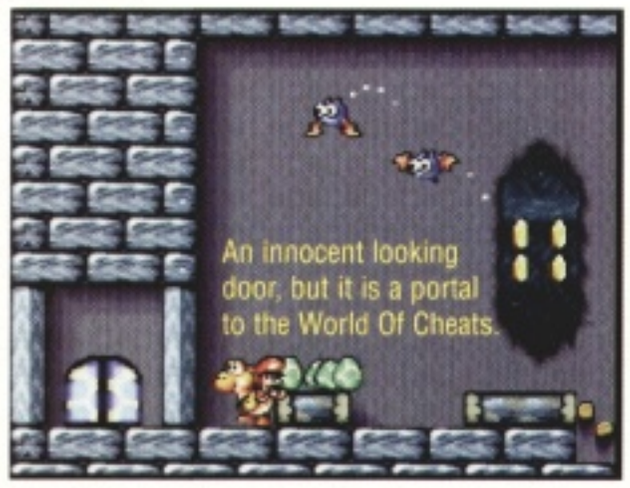
***SP36:* 94%**

- **Play the bonus games**
- **Hidden two-player battles**
- **Infinite lives scam**

We've had many letters answering Compton's plea for a *Yoshi's Island* cheat, as one is actually revealed in a secret part of the game. However, Paul Weymes of Hull sums it up perfectly: "it's in Japanese, but at the end of the message there are these letters... I'm sure you'll have access to a US version in English, or a Japanese person to translate..."

Not necessary. Gerthein Boersma of Bunnik, Netherlands taunts us Brits by mentioning that a translated PAL version of Yoshi was released back on October 20th in his part of Europe, and he is thus able to help out. What is it with this country? Only the Australians can claim to be worse off...

In World 5, stage 4 (the half-way fort), there is a door at the very beginning with a Chomp on a chain behind it. The Chomp is seemingly undefeatable by normal means, but if you use a POW block (or cloud) from your inventory you should have no problem at all. This will let you gain access to a special chamber, containing only a HINT block, which tells you the following cheat.



On any level select screen, while holding SELECT, press X, X, Y, B, A. Note that the finger cursor should be pointing at a level, or at the score or controller signs. If it's pointing at a world number the cheat will fail.

You'd best pray that chain isn't rusty.

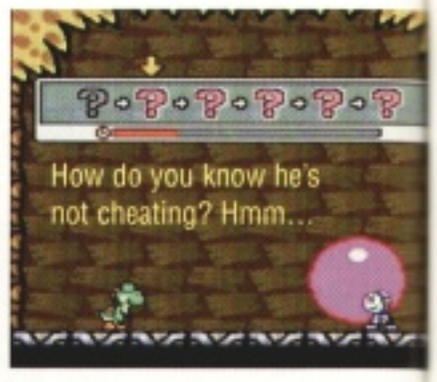
If you do it right, a new menu will pop up. From this you can choose any of the bonus games, such as are found behind locked doors on many stages: better still, if you beat it you'll get a prize. By playing the easier games (coin-grabbing, for instance) you can use this cheat to stock up on items, such as clouds and extra time stars.

Glad that's all clear, then.

But wait, it doesn't end there. There are two battle games – namely the seed-spitting and balloon-throwing variants – that can now be played against a human opponent with controller two. Hidden two-player games revealed, no less.

Wake up and play, you dopey fool.

Bonus Game 1
Balloon throwing (4): execute the four-part pad code correctly within the time limit to throw the inflating balloon at your opponent. When it reaches a certain size, it explodes.



Bonus Game 2
Balloon throwing (6): as above, but with a six-part code.

A big star bonus for my inventory.

Bonus Game 3
Balloon Squashing: try to squash as many balloons as possible within the time limit. You must work from the bottom of the screen upwards.

Spit, Yoshi! Spit like a cowpoke!

Bonus Game 4
Seed Spitting: swallow some fruit and have a seed-spitting shoot-out with your opponent. The red pumpkins let you breathe fire.

Son of Jason hath provoked a rage.

Bonus Game 5
Coin Cannon: collect more of the coins than the masked git. Yoshi's tongue gives him a healthy advantage.

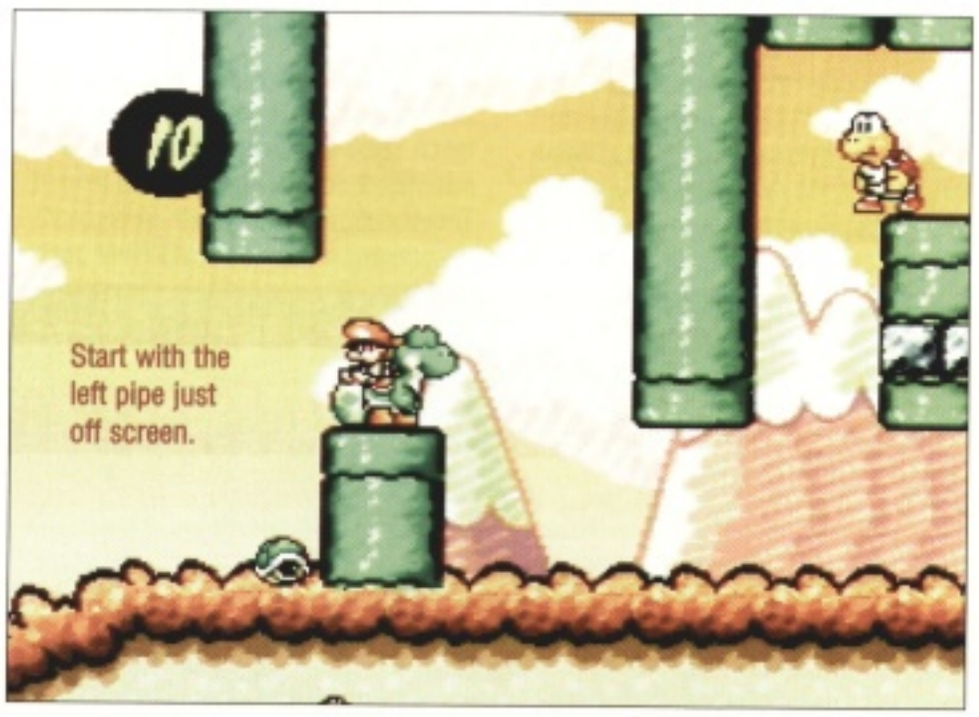
Bonus Game 6:
Balloon Throwing (Vs): As game 1 for two players.

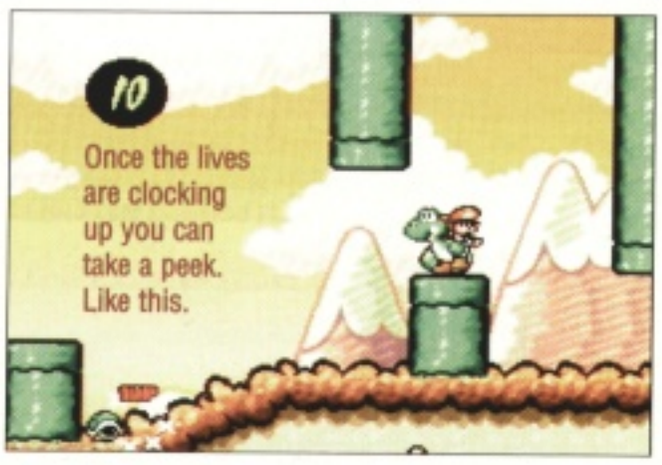
Who IS that odd green chap?

Bonus Game 7:
Seed Spitting (Vs): just to add that extra touch of hilarity, player two takes the part of the odd-looking lizard. Look at the top of the screen which now displays energy bars for players one and two.

The second hint for extra stuff is really a playing tip, and was sent in by our praiseworthy regular Bob of Lochancroft. Remember the shell-jumping stage 4-1 to work this cheat. Fairly early in the level you will discover a group of green pipes, the second and third housing two close Piranha Plants that block your path. Destroy these plants with eggs and return to the first pipe, which generates purple Shyguys. Eat Shyguys until you have laid a full complement of six eggs, then swallow a red Koopa shell and stand on the second pipe facing the first. Spit out the shell, so that it ricochets back and forth between first and second pipes. Now shoot an egg into the air where it can't do any harm. An infinite succession of Shyguys should start to appear, falling into the path of the Koopa shell and clocking up consecutive hits. After a few Shyguys the 1-Ups will begin to register, whereupon you may retire to the kitchen and make a nice cup of tea. It took just a few minutes for us to earn 100 lives, and we found you could even jump in, swallow the shell, jump out and spit it again when a group of Shyguys had gathered for 1-Up a piece, as many times as we tried.

The number of lives isn't recorded on your save point, of course, but once you've completed this stage you can return to it as many times as you wish, then perform a speedy return to the world menu by pressing START then SELECT. How very handy.





cheat for extra lives that we gave you for *Mario All-Stars*? It turns out our Bob has found a similar 1-Up loop for the Yoshmeister himself.

You need to have reached

Kill. Stomp. Maim. Shoot. And dig nice flower beds.

COMPTON'S MOST WANTED

"You're probably wondering why I've invited you all here tonight. Well, I am Mr Compton, and none of you may leave this mansion until I have your tips."

1) *Secret of Evermore.* Hidden stuff is your first priority, but I'm interested in (mwa ha ha!) bugs and loops as much as cheats. Any offers?
(2) *Doom.* I'm giving up hope here. Some odd configuration of the FX chip would explain why *Doom* is impervious to pokage from AR or GG adaptors, and even my American associates, who have had access to the game for longer than us, have failed to find any pad cheats. Time for a true tips hero to step forward, eh, mmm?
(3) *Dirt Trax FX.* No doubt plenty of odd stuff has been concealed by those Sculptured oiks. Anybody?

MECHWARRIOR 3050

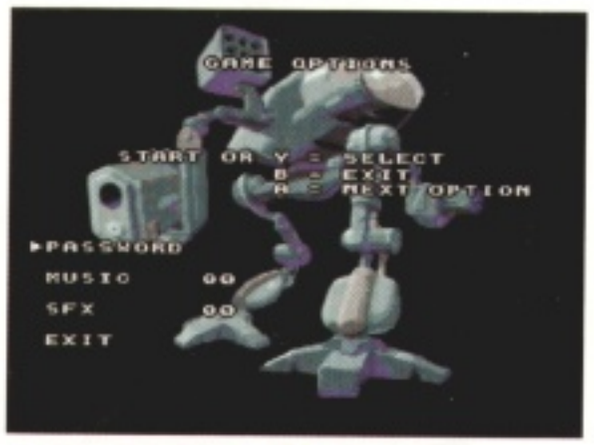
(Marubeni)
***SP38:* 77%**

- **Level codes**
- **Infinite ammo**

"The candle that burns twice as bright burns half as long," as Mr Tyrell explained to a longevity-challenged Roy Batty shortly before having his eyeballs popped by the same. It gives me no great pleasure to reveal my own list of passwords for this oh-so-brief but enjoyable *Battletech* title.

Alshain	no password
Satalice	65C816
Ridderkerk	B1GBND
Avon	FSPRNG
Comstar	YHWX11

I don't advise using them yourself, of course. Just consider this a permanent glossy record to save you the effort of scrabbling about for a pen. Furthermore, I've since discovered a special code that grants you infinite ammunition for all three weapon types. Simply enter:
M1R0G3
and begin a new game as usual. Since it doesn't offer invincibility you'll still need to search out coolant supplies and make sure that your weapon arm doesn't overheat, but you can pretty much forget the strategy side and blast away with unlimited guided missiles.



Hey guys, attractive character font.

A little overzealous on the screenshots, weren't we?

SUPER BOMBERMAN 3

(Hudson)

SP37: 89%

- **Extra hard computer opponents**
- **Skip to the End sequence**
- **Start level with full power-ups**
- **Two extra stages on Battle Game**
- **Add 30 new stages to Battle Game**

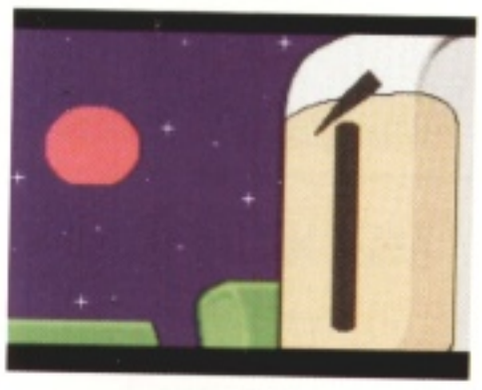
The following examples of Cheating Excellence were provided by Allan Wong of Addlestone, Surrey, who saw Mr Compton's plea for *SB3* codes. Allan says he actually sent them in before, and wonders if somebody nicked the lovely *Dragonball Z* notepaper they were written on. Very likely 'round here, Allan. These cheats originate from the Japanese version but I've also tested them on a PAL cart and can vouch for their universality.

Note that all of these codes, including those affecting Battle Games, are entered after selecting Normal Game and Password.

To get Extra Hard computer bombers in the Battle Game, enter the password 1511. You'll be taken straight to the option screen for the Battle Game where you'll now see COM LEVEL 4 highlighted.

That's the option screen translated for anybody with a Japanese cart.

Should you wish to negate the value of your purchase, to skip straight to the ending sequence for the Normal Game, enter your password as 0803.



The French Bombergirl, your hostess for the password screen.

"Ein Volk! Ein..." – the dark conformist underside of *Bomberman* culture.

Full bombs, full range, a slide kick and detonators from the start. Yes. Yes.

The following passwords let you start each level of the Normal Game with full power-ups.

Level	Password
1-1	0704
2-1	3200
3-1	2711
4-1	3870
5-1	4501
6-1	0606
Final	3104

The next cheat is a little more obscure. Allan says he used an official Hudson Power Joypad (with rapid fire): it may work with other kinds of joypad that carry autofire, and it's certainly worth a try, but I'm suspicious that Hudson has tailored it to their own peripherals.

Set the rapid fire for the X button to twice the speed. On the title screen, hold X for at least six seconds. Now choose a Battle Game and, if all has gone well, you should have two extra stages to choose.

The following codes change the layout of obstacles in the playing area of each Battle Game stage. Depending on which stage you select, the codes will have a different effect. So choose just one of the following passwords, enter it, then start a Battle Game to see the differences they'll make to the screen.

1616
4622
3194

As an example, if you choose Stage 1 after entering 4622, you'll remove all the destructible blocks. Or if you choose Stage 5 (Slip 'n' Slide), the effects are as follows:

1616 – Places four igloos in the game arena
4622 – No igloos at all, just three big snowballs
3194 – One snowball along with two igloos

A Snowball is also a cocktail, made from lemonade and aardvarks.

They aren't strictly new stages, but it does inject a bit of variation into the proceedings. Anything that gives you an excuse to call your mates round for another evening of multi-tap *Bomberman* is fine by me and is heartily encouraged.

Without meaning to step on Compton's toes, I wonder (aloud) if anybody has a sound test cheat? I'm especially taken with that Cypress Hill-esque sampled reworking of the *Bomberman* theme.

DON'T ASK ALLAN

INVALUABLE MONTHLY GAMING ADVICE

Would you kindly address your letters to me, Zy, from now on? Please? It's frightening what you people come up with when your imaginations are allowed to run riot.

Dear Danny (oops, sorry),
I've just bought *MK3* and here's what I need help with. To perform an Animality you need to do something called a 'Mercy'. How do I do it?
Ian Farquharson, Elgin, Inverness

Zy says:
A Mercy is when you cut some slack for your opponent by holding the RUN button and pressing down twice. They'll regain some energy (?)

To set up the conditions for an Animality, you should do the Mercy in the final round. And the bad news: you also need to refrain from using BLOCK in that round.

Dear Zy,
I have *Mortal Kombat* for the SNES and I don't know any moves or cheats. Please could you tell me the blood code and some finishing moves.
Christopher Button, Grimsby

Dear Zy,
My son has recently acquired *Mortal Kombat II* but he doesn't know any of the moves. Can you help??
Yours sincerely,
N. Partou, Enfield

Zy says:
these are fairly typical letters for the past few months. I'll start by saying this: there is NO BLOOD CODE for SNES *Mortal Kombat*. Got that? You're confusing it with the Mega Drive version, which had a 'dullard' code. The gore was, of course, censored by Nintendo.

If you've recently bought *MKII* at budget price and want to know the moves, get in touch with our back issues department in Somerton (address on page 81) and ask for *Super Play 24*, where the moves are included with the review. Dan Jevons' two-part strategy guide was printed in *SP25* and *SP26* while *SP26* has a few cheats for the game. Sorry but we really don't have space for reprints.

Dear Zy,
In my current game of *Breath of Fire* I've found a few new areas to fish that don't seem to do anything. I've been trying with the Rod4 for ages but not a bite. Do I need special bait or something?
Adam Knowles, Edinburgh

Zy says:
Ah, I see you're missing the Rod5. In the course of the game you will be presented with an object called the Sphere, which allows Gobi to morph into a giant fish. In his transformed state Gobi can reach new areas, such as Tunlan, by travelling under the ocean. Look for a pit to the left of the vault in the home of the Princess of Tunlan: jumping down into it, you'll discover a box containing the Rod5, which can be used to find the following Dragon items in these locations. Don't forget to equip some kind of bait with your rod.
(1) Slab: Head northwest from Tantar. The slab refers to the fourth shrine.
(2) The Dragon Sword: head west from Agua and you'll find a well, a little to the east of the third shrine.

The legs of a baby deer, the arms of an Cornish fisherman.

MORTAL KOMBAT 3

(Acclaim/Williams)

***SP37:* 85%**

● Make Cyrax invisible

Yes, I know I called a moratorium on *MK3* stuff – after all, they only fill these games with millions of cheats because it gets them months of follow-up coverage (and thus pages of free advertising) in the specialist magazines. However, the following hack is not a cheat but a BUG that will glitch the game, and may thus bring a smile to those who really can't stand *Mortal Kombat* in any form. Congratulations go to Ross Sutherland of Aberdeen, for he was the first to draw our attention to it.

Choose Cyrax as your character. From a good distance throw a Far Grenade (hold LK, F, F, HK) and quickly cast your Net (B, B, LK). Just as the Net strikes your opponent, perform a Teleport (F, D, Block). If you time it correctly, you'll seem to teleport inside the Net and it will go black for a second before vanishing. Your Cyrax is now invisible: you can make out his position from his shadow, which remains, but in this form he cannot move. Nor can he be hurt by any attack, except a throw. Ross says it's a good cheap way of beating Shao Kahn, who has no throw move.

All of this is accompanied by serious glitching of the floor and background graphics, and reminds me of the series of *MK1* and *2* bugs we've printed in the past. Tsk, tsk. Incidentally, it's been pointed out to me that the Slots game occasionally reveals Kombat Kodes to be entered on the Vs screen. Ah, I see. And am I correct in thinking that the Ultimate Kombat Kode simply doesn't exist in the finished SNES conversion?

Liu Kang, surfing the net, heh heh. Oh look, I'm really sorry about that one...

... Oh look, it wasn't that bad, was it? No, I think maybe you're right.

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER DELUXE

(Konami)

***SP38:* 94%**

● Turn the referee into a dog

If you saw our review of *ISS Deluxe* in issue 38 you'll know that Will Groves came across a bizarre cheat for turning the referee into a dog. Regrettably, Will wasn't able to tell us how he made it happen during his playtesting. Doh!

A little exploration was all it took. What you have to do is enter the traditional Konami cheat of up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, B, A on controller 2. Use it on the title screen and the potential for soccer-bound *One Man And His Dog* jokes is frighteningly endless. Oh joy!

ADDAMS FAMILY VALUES

(Ocean)

***SP31:* 75%**

● Invincibility

Regular sender-inner Richard Melville has reminded me of an official Ocean invincibility cheat for the game we have never called '*Addams Values Family*'. I should admit that it never worked on our pre-production cartridge, but try it out.

Enter the inventory screen. Place the glove cursor in the top right hand corner of the item box (which is situated bottom right of the screen), then exit to the game. Holding L and SELECT, hit START to return to the inventory and press R, A, B, R, A, B. If all goes well, we're told that you should hear a burping sound.

Incidentally, the chap known as 'the Melvillester' has abandoned his fanzine *Street Fighting Journal* and now does bits and pieces for *The Devon Leader*. If his cheat works with finished cartridges, all praise to him. If it doesn't, phone them up and make accusations about his journalistic integrity. And not us – we're not in.

(3) The Dragon Armour: Once in the town of Spring, look for stairs leading down and walk into the water surrounding the town. Look for a route back onto land on the other side, where you'll find a duckpond and a pier. Fish from the pier to get the Armour.
(4) The Dragon Helmet: head southwest from Arad. You can only reach this well by flying.
(5) The Dragon Shield: fly west from Gust to a well surrounded by mountains.

Dear Zy,
Could you please, please give me a password for any team to play the Superstar Team on the Hard mode setting, as I have tried so hard but with very little success.
Lee Beattie, County Tyrone, N. Ireland.

Zy says:
It just so happens that Matthew Symes of Norwood, SE London has sent me a code for Brazil vs. Superstars on the Hard difficulty grade. Or at least that's what he claims it is. It might be some experimental beat poetry from Prague, I can't tell.

$H?Vg 2~hr9 BZVCH ZVCHZ VCHZV CHZVC R

Is this of any use?

LOST SOULS

Contrary to popular belief, I'm not quite sad enough to have intimate knowledge every single SNES game ever. Bear witness to the following chink in my armour:

Dear Zy,
I'm having trouble with *Dragonball Z 3*. I cannot seem to do any big (and I mean BIG) fireballs. Can you help me please? Perhaps you could do another guide? Thank you.
Robert Nguyen, Cambridge.

Unfortunately, my dabbling with megablast fireballs goes no further than *DBZ2*. Can anybody out there explain, for Robert's sake, how to do them in the third game? How are they different from previous games?

WHEN WRITING TO MODE 7...

Please don't waste your money enclosing an SAE. We honestly do not have time to answer personal correspondence. I'm sorry if you haven't received a pen, badge or other prize yet, but since I took over this column I've found quite a backlog of stuff to sort out. I'm working through the list, so bear with me.

Incidentally, the long lead time in monthly publishing means that I'm having to compile this column in mid-November. Yes, Mode 7's contributors really are that hot. Readers who send cheats the day before the mag appears in their newsagents and then complain they've not been published should take heed. Write to:
Mode 7
Super Play
Future Publishing Ltd.
30 Monmouth Street
Bath, Avon
BA1 2BW

SUPER MARKET

FREE ADS

It's just like a normal market, filled with great deals, special offers and top bargains. Only it's 'Super' and full of games and that.

MESSAGES AND EVENTS

● Wanted: Female penpals age 14-19, any interests, write now! All letters answered. Bye for now. Carl Wilkins, 58 Wetherfild Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 3HS.

● If you want a mobile phone for free just call Michael on 0956 126504 Now!

● Tons of computer mags for sale. Mostly Nintendo and no available on back issue depots. Incl Total!, NMS, N-Force, CVG, Imports & more. Free posters, booklets, stickers, game cards eg SFII-Novel, A1 sized(!) DKC/Killer Instinct & Nintendo Challenger (Game Van) posters, 16 SSFII stickers, CVG Xmas and post cards, 6 vols of Index game books, Nintendo Game Secrets (worth £10) and much more. Worth £300 – sell for £60. Anime from £4. PSX wanted. Call Joe 0181 462 6838.

● Super Play issues 1, 2 and 3 plus SP Gold £60 or £20 individually. Super Play issues 4-18 £30. Edge issues 1-4 plus binder £60. Tel 01501 822989.

● Yes! You could be my penpal. You must like SNES, love drawing and adore Manga. 13-15 years old preferred, male and female. Please write to Marc Partridge, 22 Belair Rd, Peverell, Plymouth, Devon PL2 3QH.

● Manga posters for sale. Be cool and buy some official UK incl live-action eg Gunhead, famous anime eg Akira, lesser known eg Dangaioh, Wind of Amnesia, limited/promo ones as well. I've got 50+ different ones, but only one of each. I'll throw in some Manga vids if you buy lots. Send SAE for list to Joe Lee, 99 Turpington Lane, Bromley, Kent BR2 8JD.

● Please support the Wildhearts Protection Society (WPS). Don't let such talent go to waste. Spread the word.

● Mean Machines (Pre Sega) complete set 0-26 and Edge No 4-26 offers. Tel 017048 72435.

● Super Play issues 1-21, 24-27 including Gold issue. £40 Tel: 01793 728013, ask for Mark. Must collect.

● I would like to say a very big sorry to all the people who haven't had a reply off me, I've ended up with 50 odd. Love Mei.

● Super Play issues 1-38 for sale £30 & boxed SN program pad for sale £12. Tel 01698 834414.

● Manga videos for sale: AD Police 1-3, GenoCyber 1-3, Cyber City 1-3, Overfiend 1-6, Marcross II 1-6, Magima 1-4. All boxed excellent condition. Tel Monir 0181 871 2396.

● Over several hundred hours of animes for sale & swap. Call Jan-Fei on 01734 612930 or 0421 001464. Also tons of manga for sale.

● Anime vids only £6 each! 60 in total, price includes postal costs, phone for list. Tel 01582 418246 eve.

● Many computer mags for sale, 1st editions, all editions, Super Play, MM, C&VG etc. Call 0181 257 0203.

● Issues 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10-14, 16-25 of Super Play, 1-5 of NMS, 1-5 of N-Force, 1 and 6 of GamesMaster. Phone Robert on 01203 302043 after 5pm for prices.

● Philip Lai, you games player, get off Tekken and let me have a go! Love GF Jenny.

● 21-year-old male looking for female penpals aged 17+. I like sci-fi, fantasy, horror and computer games. Write to Hayden Waring, 13 The Crescent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7AQ.

● Super Play mags most copies available. Issues 1-4 £3 inc p&p. Others 2 for £4 inc p&p. Tel 01245 472572.

● About 70 Sega and multi-format magazines including Edge, Mega Machines, CVG and many other greats. Offers welcome. Tel 01203 302043.

● Anime fans! I have over 600 titles for sale or swap. No time wasters. For details contact Mark on 01604 881 805.

FANZINES

● Nintendo Fanzine System. A light-hearted-cum-serious look at video games. Send £1.50 to 10 Skeleton Close, Holtspur, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 1EA for issue 2!

● Journeys End RPG Fanzine. £1.50 or £5 for 4 issues. Contact Ann 0121 604 7524, 230 Thornbridge Avenue, Gt Barr, B'ham B42 2AL. First four issues out now!

● A4 cheat booklet for MK games (inc be the bosses in MK3). Cheats never heard of before. Send SAE & £1.50 to Simon Davis, 75 Airedale Avenue, Chiswick, London.

● SNES conversions 50/60Hz switch, the only option to play FFIII/Front Mission etc on a UK SNES £12 p&p inclusive. Special service offered by Role Call, the RPG fanzine. Call for details 01925 490910.

● Thunder Bolt Nassir. UK's first soccer manga fanzine. Bamen ichi out Jan & win a cel! For information write to Manaf Al-Muhandis, Villa 777, Road 2418, Al-Eker 624, Bahrain.

● Role Call – the choice for RPG fans, now up to issue 4 (special cover edition) £1.20 per issue, £7.00 for 6 (subscription) featuring all latest games, across the formats, tips and art. Tel 01925 490910. Rachel Ryan, 25 Oakdene Ave, Woolston, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4NU.

HARDWARE FOR SALE

● SNES (UK) for sale. Unboxed with 5 joy pads, 4 player adaptor, joystick, universal adaptor, carry case + 22 games & Super Game Boy. £300. Tel 01705 502238.

● SNES + 6 top games, 4 joy pads, multi-tap & Bomberman, Universal adaptor. £100 reasonable offers accepted. Must collect. Surrey SE. Ask for Ben. Tel 0181 657 4366.

● UK SNES with 6 games. Mario Kart, SFIIT, Starwing, World Cup 94, Donkey Kong Country & Super R-type (US) with convertor & pads. £140. Tel 01934 712502.

● SNES for sale. 9 games, 4 pads, multi-tap, convertor. In very good condition. All for £150. Ask for Chris. Tel 0181 856 0195.

● UK SNES, 15 games, 3 pads, Multitap, Universal adaptor. Excellent condition £280. Tel 01292 550 283.

● Super Famicom Share, PSU, 2 pads, US convertor, stereo leads. Everything is boxed immaculate. Comes with Shigeru Miyamoto's greatest hits, Yossy's Island, Pilotwings, MarioKart. £180. Tel 01252 621501.

● Super NES plus 2 control pads. 8 cartridges/11 games inc Mk II NBA Jam, SFII, Mario Allstars. £120 ono. Tel 01664 424248 (Leics).

● UK SNES, 8 games inc Mario World, Mario Kart, SFII, Fifa International Soccer. All boxed, mint, all leads inc. £230 ono. Tel 01372 373152.

● Xmas bargain! UK SNES, Scart lead, 2 pads, 2 convertors, with SFII, Starwing, Mario Kart, Striker, Mana, SSF2, DKC + issues 3-29 of SPlay. All for £200. Call 01424 714458. Merry Christmas.

● UK SNES for sale. Mario 3, Zelda, Star Wars, Turtles 1 & 2, Megaman 2, & 12 other games, 2 joypads, 1 joystick, tips book, all boxed with manuals. Vgc £80 ono. Call 01733 325535. Buyer collects (Peterboro) Will swap for SNES games.

● UK SNES for sale. 2 joypads, stereo leads, convertor, 6 games inc DKC, ISS, Sim City, Super Tennis & every issue of Super Play except issue 3. £220 ono. Tel 01705 345918.

● SNES for sale, with over 20 games, 4-player adaptor and magazines. £290. Will swap for Amiga CD32. Tel 0161 248 8466.

● UK SNES, 19 top games inc ISS,NBA JAM TE, MK2, Street Racer, MarioKart, Secret of Mana, Bomberman. Includes Multitap, 4 control pads, convertor. All boxed only £275. Tel 01458 252529.

● Game Boy & approx 12 games for sale. Also includes case, adaptor, magnifier and leads. All for £80. Call Tom on 01799 502426.

● UK SNES, 3 pads, 21 games, Super Scope light gun with a 6 game cartridge and an action replay. Worth £1000+ Sell for £320. Tel 01904 414199.

● UK SNES for sale with 13 games and 2 auto joy pad. Worth over £500, sell for £250. Phone for details. Tel Alex 0956 924389 (anytime).

● US SNES. 9 top games, extra joypad, Pro Action Replay 2 mags. All boxed with intructions. All as new. Bargain £140 no offers. Will not split. Tel 0151 264 0134.

● UK SNES (SCART). 3 joypads with 10 games inc Super Metroid, SMAS, Stunt Race FX. £120 ono. Ask for Alex. Tel 01943 466970.

● SNES Pal Version & 15 games. All top titles + turbo pad and 2 normal pads. Worth £500, sell for £250 ono. Tel 01992 623131.

● Free Ferrari when you buy SNES & 14 games and Super Scope, carry case and universal adaptor & 3 joypads inc Turbo. £300 ono. Tel 0171 731 1776 (after 6pm).

● SNES (UK). 16 top games, boxed with instructions, 2 joypads, loads of mags and guides. Vgc £220 ono. Worth £1000. Also Game Boy, 8 games, mains adaptor, 2 player adaptor, some mags, £50.

● SNES with 2 joypads plus games Street Fighter II and F-Zero £60. Super Game Boy (for SNES) £20. Also SNES games: Donkey Kong Country £25, Zelda III £20, Starwing £12, Sim City £12. All boxed. Tel 01706 368931.

● UK SNES, 13 games, 2 controllers, Multi-tap, Super Game Boy with Game Boy games, SFII, DKC, All Stars, Mario Kart – just a few of 13 available. Open to offers. Tel 01483 273472.

● SNES UK 16 games inc Shadowrun, AR2, Zelda, Mario Kart, JP, All UK games apart for SUS, SSFII, Shadowrun & more. Carry case, all leads, 4 controllers (inc program & turbo). You collect of pay for delivery. All boxed £200. Tel 0181 864 1931.

● UK SNES 14 games, Action replay, spare pad, Trailblazer, joystick, Scart cable, 80 magazines. Buyer collects. £240. Tel 01993 823326 (Oxon).

● UK SNES: 2 control pads, extra leads included, 4 games, (Earthworm Jim UK, Flashback UK, Batman & Robin UK, Mario Kart US), convertor (US), carry case & 36 magazines. Vgc £180-200 ono. Tel 01992 717480.

● UK SNES for sale, with multi-tap, 4 pads, universal adaptor and 30 games (all 80% & insp) including DKC, ISS, Super Punchout and Street Racer. £350 ono. Dartford Area. Tel 01322 229847.

● UK SNES for sale. 11games inc Superstar Soccer, Dragon, Smash Tennis and Bomberman2. Also Multi-tap with 3 joypads & convertor for £190. Tel 01142 661978.

● For sale boxed PlayStation with demo disk one plus Tekken £250. Contact Ricky 0181 368 7486.

● Amiga 600 inc 14" monitor, 2 joysticks, external drive, mouse, pad, disc box with loads of games. Cost over £650. Will accept £215. All boxed and as new! Tel 01282 421968.

● UK SNES, 21 games, 2 joypads, adaptor, carry case, loads of magazines, 2 videos. £400 mint condition. Tel 0114 266 3071.

● 50/60hz UK Mega Drive, 3 pads, Sonic, Virtua Racing, full screen/speed, Scart lead, boxed etc. All for £50 or will swap for Tekken or Yoshi's Island. Tel 01243 374854.

● SNES with 6 games, includes MKII andR-type III, 2 joy pads. £140. Tel 0181 908 2853.

● UK SNES, 11 of the best games, including SOM, Cannon Fodder, Mario Kart and Zelda. Also Multi-tap and 4 controllers. All in good condition and worth over £500. Will sell for £350. Call Andy on 01706 370992.

● Game Boy, 8 games, adaptor. Excellent condition £130. Game Gear, 5 games £40. The lot for £150. Tel 0114 266 3071.

● SNES, 6 games, Killer Instinct, Mana, NBA Jam, 2 pads, adaptor, Super Play issues 1-35. Sell for £150. Also Amiga 500+ to get rid of £200 the lot. Ring 01543 672050, ask for Matt. Must collect.

● Yo! SNES, 6 games and loads of stuff. Worth £245, sell for£165. With free SNES mags worth £70! Also Anime vids for sale. Call 01203 465683 now.

● SNES for sale with 10 excellent games such as Super Punch Out and UniRally, also Killer Instinct, 2 joypads, universal adaptor. £260. Tel 01753 540542.

● SNES UK with 7 games, Superscope, 3 joy pads, magazines and carrying case. Games include Super Punch Out, Metroid & Mario Kart. £150. Tel 0115 981 0170.

● Amiga A500. 1.5 meg, programs, games, joysticks and A9 pin colour printer (all boxed as new). Tel Monir 0181 871 2396.

● Game gear with 4 games, mains adaptor and carry case. All for £80. Excellent condition. Tel 01666 840522.

● UK SNES: 14 games including MK 1 & 2, Clayfighter 2, SF2, DKC, 2 joypads, Game Genie. All boxed £270 ono. Call Justin 0589 977827.

● JAP Super Famicom (60Hz, full screen, Scart) & 23 games inc Yoshi's Island, Wildtrax, Mana, Final Fantasy 2, Mario Kart, Mario Collection, and NBA Jam TE plus multitap, 3 controllers, hi-fi leads. All in excellent condition.Worth over £1600. Sell for £650. Also 100s of magazines inc Mean Machines No 1. Phone Mark on 01292 315349.

● Game Boy, 10 games. Cost £300. Offers accepted, starting price £45. Tel 01223 361108.

● SNES, 2 pads, Street Fighter II Turbo, Cybernator, Bomberman, Probetector, Street Fighter 2 – original, Mario Kart, Paradious, Jap convertor and all the leads. Super price for a super console only £140. With all time top classic games phone quick, first come first served. Tel Chris 01341 281269.

● Bargain!! UK SNES & 2 pads & adaptor & 5 games 90-93%. £130! with Mystic Quest and over 15 SNES magazines free!! Tel Jack 01223 361108.

● Mega Drive for sale, 6 games including Super Street Fighter 2 and Sonic Spinball, one 6 button and one 3 button joypad, Japanese convertor. £100 ono. Tel 01684 567633.

● Atari Jaguar, boxed with excellent games and two pads. Mint condition £175 ono. Call 01278 782161. Ask for Brendan.

● UK SNES, 7 games all boxed with instructions, US/Jap convertor, carry case. Only £150 ono. Phone Andy 01773 825187.

● I have a Jap SNES with 6 wicked games and 3 pads with 2 adaptors and an action replay. Ideal Christmas present. All for £150 ono. Please

contact Kieron on 01359 230493 (after 5.30pm).

● Spare Xmas cash? Look no further: ISS – brand new, box etc – unwanted present £20. Game Gear & Jungle Book (no box, no inst) £30. Tel Peter 01903 783144.

● UK SNES, 14 games inc SF2TE, Donkey Kong, SMK, Universal adaptor, Scart leads, 2 joypads,scope gun. All full boxed. Great condition. Worth £700+, sell for £325 ono. Tel 01204 577457.

● Mega Drive, 10 games, 2 control pads, games are Earth Worm Jim, NBA Jam, Mortal Kombat, Street Fighter II and 6 more. All for £160. Tel 0181 771 3588.

● Jap SNES: complete with Scart lead, adaptor, joypads, 10 games and action replay MKI + II. All boxed as new. Tel Monir 0181 871 2396.

● Game Gear with 7 games including Micro Machines, World Cup Soccer, plus adaptor for home use and carry case. £120. Tel Simon 01580 762663.

● Game Gear for sale, 12 games including Sonic 2 and Sonic Chaos, Sensible Soccer and World Cup USA 954. Carry case and car adaptor. £60. Tel Dave 01273 551615.

● Super NES, US version, 5 games, 2 pads, SN programmable joystick, top of the range datel convertor. All boxed in good condition with loads of magazines. Worth £400+, offers to Tom 0114 230 5130.

● SNES for sale with 4 games, MK2, Batman Forever, Street Racer and Super Mario World, 2 controllers for £100. Tel 0181 291 5691.

● SNES one control pad, Mortal Kombat 2, Zelda, Secret of Mana, Mystical Ninja, Street Fighter 2, Pop and Twinbee, convertor. £160. Tel 0171 249 0687.

● SNES for sale with 11 games inc SSFII, SMK, Super Metroid & Scope. £180. Tel Tom 0181 341 5004. Ring 6-7pm.

SWAPS

● I have many decent SNES and GB games up for sale or swap. They include Tiny Toons (SNES), Battletoads in Battlemaniacs (SNES), Batman: ROTJ (GB), Gremlins 2 (GB), Super Mario Land (GB), Burai Fighter (GB) and Tetris (GB). All offers considered. If interested please phone Ian on 0181 890 1632.

● US SNES and 2 joypads and one joystick and convertor and six games and Game Gear with four games and a mains adaptor for a 'Super Console', or the lot and an A1200 with games for a PC 486. Phone 0181 539 7245 after 6pm.

● I want FFII (US). I will swap it for Super Mario World (unboxed and US), Blazeon (US), Thunder Spirits (US), Equinox (UK), or Strike Gunner (UK). Will swap two for one. Tel 01473 462674.

● Swap my Mario All Stars for your Secret of Mana. Must have box & instructions like mine. I will buy Secret of Mana for £20. Also wanted SNES Advantage. I will pay £15. Ask for Robert 01203 302043.

● I would like MK2. I will swap for Manga videos, Vampire Hunter D, Urotsukidoji 1 & 2 or Golgo 13. Tel 01343 546609.

● I'll swap my Mortal Kombat II (Jap) or Cool Spot (US) for your Final Fantasy III, Street Racer or Super Street Fighter 2. Must be in US version. Kevin Li Ting Chung, 10c Little Salt, Pan Street, Port Louis, Mauritius.

● Bargain swap. My Mystical Ninja (UK), Jungle Book (UK) and Game Genie (UK) for your Final Fantasy III and Action Replay 2 (or maybe Universal adaptor). Write to Kim Bassix, 44 Lavers Close, Kingswood, Bristol BS15 2ZG.

● For sale/swap: US Earthbound, NBA Jam, MKII, SFII, Super Tennis, Utopia, Zelda. UK Fifa, Mystical Ninja, Mana, Royal Rumble. Wanted WWF Raw SB2. Tel Owen 01756 701609.

● Swap or sell these SNES games: Mortal Kombat 2, Street Racer, Kick Off 3, Final Fight 2 for Top Gear2 or 3000, ISSD or Fifa 96. Tel (Tooting, London) 333 2536.

● I will swap my Super Star Wars for Biker Mice From Mars. Tel 01277 355239.

● Wanted: Front Mission or any RPGs (apart from SOM) will swap Mario All Stars, Cybernator or Zombies. Ask for Stephen 01909 568197.

● I will swap Starwing (UK) for Earthworm Jim (UK). Ask for Craig. After 4pm 0121 604 3595.

● Super Nintendo games for exchange top titles, large selection. Tel 01707 268285 anytime.

● I will swap my R-type (UK), Bonkers (US) and Cannon Fodder (UK), plus £6 for your MK3, Killer Instinct or Super Bomberman 3. Call Amer 0141 339 4007.

● I'll swap your Final Fight 1 (and/or) 2 for either Super Protector, Turtles TF, MKI, Super Smash TV or Total Carnage! Tel 01705 617913.

● SNES game Starwing + £5 or Super Star Wars + £5, will swap for Stunt Race FX. Call Steven on 01473 273168 now!

● Swap US game Killer Instinct for US Earthbound and 1 other good US game. Tel 0117 949 7051, ask for Tom.

● Mario All Stars or Pro Action Replay for Super SF2, Secret of Mana, Illusion of Gaia, Soul Blazer or Illusion of Time. Tel 01203 302043.

● Mario All Stars for Vortex, Wolfenstein 3D, Secret of Mana, Unirally, Lethal Enforces (must have at least one gun) or Muscle Bomber. Tel 01203 302043.

GAMES FOR SALE

● Complete set of 81 Robot Carnival trading cards. No longer available. £20 ono. Phone 01734 832955 and ask for Chris.

● SNES Games for sale (Earthworm Jim...) good prices. For information call Steven 01621 84-177 after 5pm.

● NES + 8 games includes gun for Duck Hunt, games include Star Wars, Maniac Mansion, Roller Games, Mega Man II etc. Tel 01403 752151.

● UK SNES games for sale SFII Turbo, Indy Jones, Pac-attack, N M Indycar, Syndicate, Plok, Dragon, Dino Dini Soccer, Fun and Games. £20 each. Many more. Tel for list 01622 746266.

● UK SNES games for sale: Gear 2, Sim City, Zelda 3, Metal Marines (warfare game) £20 ono each. Secret of Mana £25 ono. Call Alex on 01303 892099.

● Jap PC Engine games, Don Doko Don, BC Kid 2, Jackie Chan, Aeroblasters, Beball, Son Son 2, Blue Blink, World Court Tennis, Ordyne. All imacculate, as new. Tel 01252 621601.

● Ghoul Patrol (UK version) for sale. £20 ono buyer must collect. Tel 01642 597179 from 4-9pm.

● (New!) Killer Instinct & CD £50; SSF2 £27; NBA Live £27; Syndicate £22; Turbo £15; Metroid £27; Sim City £10 (2nd hand); Shadowrun £10; Myst Ninja £20; Cybernator £15. £364 all + UK SNES! (free). Tel 01382 738396.

● Six games for sale with instructions and boxed: Lagoon (RPG) £10, Jurassic Park £15, Populous £15, Clay Fighter £15, Pop 'n' Twinbee 2 £20. Phone Barry on 01442 873419 after 6pm Monday to Thursday.

● Chrono Trigger £36. Secret of Evermore £32 (p&p incl). Tel 01379 740367.

● 85%+ SNES games for sale, 4 in total, worth £150+ inc Final Fantasy II, Cybernator & more. Sell £60. Plus, Demon Crest £20, Breath of Fire £25, Zelda £15, Soulblazer £25, Earth Worm Jim £20. Offers? A new manga/anime for sale. These are definitely going to go quickly – call now. Joe's the name – 0181 462 6838.

● RPGs galore! BOF £28, Final Fantasy 2 & 3 £23, Zelda £16, SOM £23, Dungeon Master £15, Soul Blazer £23, Demon Crest £22. FF2 (GB), Zelda, Mystic Quest (prequel to Mana) £12 each. Plus DKC £30 & EWJ £23. A free game (rated 90%) with a sale of 4+ SNES games! incl p&p. Wanted/offer PSX, FF3 (GB) RPGs, Anime contacts. Tel 0181 462 6838.

● SNES games: Jurassic Park £12, DARO Superman £15, Batman Returns £10, Spiderman/X-Men £10. Write to Malcolm: 146 The Beeches, Cruddas Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7HE. Send phone number – I'll ring you.

● 30+ SNES games for sale eg FFII and III, Mana, Breath of Fire, Zelda, Illusion of time, DKC, EWJ, Axelay, Bomberman 2, Soul Blazer, Mario Kart. All top games from £10 upwards. I'll pay the postage. Phone Ian for full details on 0151 200 2475.

● Mario All Stars (UK) unboxed £15, Secret of Mana (UK) boxed £25 or swap both for Final Fantasy III. Ring Adrian 0181 863 8202.

● For sale: Sensi Soccer £10, Kick Off £5, Flashback £5, Major Title Golf £10. The lot for £25. Tel 0161 449 0534.

● SNES games! Max Carnage, Wolverine, NBA Jam, SFII Turbo (US), Desert Strike, Street Racer, TMHT Tournament, FIFA £20. Tiny Toons, Castlevania, MK, Parodius, Mario Kart, Plok!, Populous, Pilot Wings, Ghouls and Ghosts, £15. Wolfenstein £5 (no box or instructions). Must collect. Middx area. Tel 01895 238065.

● SNES (UK) games for sale: NBA Live 95 £25, Secret of Mana £22, Zelda: A Link To The Past £20, Starwing £15. All boxed with instructions. Tel 01527 543634.

● Earthbound £25, Chrono Trigger £30, Evermore £35, Illusion of Gaia £20, Mana £20, All USA, Zelda £15 UK - many others. Please phone 0181 995 2972 (p&p extra).

● FFIII: 2 months old with booklet and map, sell for £45. No swaps. Phone Michael on 01732 864652.

● Doom (US) £30, Stunt Race FX (US) £25, p&p incl. Tel 01379 740367.

● £10 SFFII, Super Battletoads. £15 Super Smash, TV, Cybernator, Buster Busts Loose, Cool Spot, Zombies Ate My Neighbours. Must live in London. Ring any time. 0181 789 9189.

● Earthbound (US) £39. Blackpool area. Tel 01253 867469.

● R-type III, Alien 3, Jurassic Park, Super Swiv, Flashback, Turtles in Time, Equinox £15. MK £15-20. Rival Turf, Super Strike Gunner £20. Must live in London. Tel 0181 784 9189.

● £20 Wrestlemania, Pop 'n' Twinbee II, £20-25 Super Bomberman, Super Probotector, UN Squadron, £25-30 NBA Jam, £30 ISS, Hebereke's Popoon, Mega Man-X, Secret Of Mana. Must live in London. Tel 0181 789 9189.

● PilotWings (Jap) £5, SFII Turbo (US) £8, Stunt Race FX (US) £20. Ask for Terry if interested Tel 01707 284851 Herts.

● I have many decent SNES and GB games up for sale or swap. They include Tiny Toons (SNES), Battletoads in Battlemaniacs (SNES), Batman: ROTJ (GB), Gremlins 2 (GB), Super Mario Land (GB), Burai Fighter (GB) and Tetrio (GB). All offers considered. If interested please phone Ian on 0181 890 1632

● Cheap foreign games for sale. Lemmings (Jap) £5, Super Double Dragon £10 (US), Super Turrican (US) £10, Secret of Mana (US) £15, Top Gear 2 (US) £10. Ask for Chris 01524 241305.

● SNES games: Bubsy, Joe & Mac, Mega Man X, Bomberman, Super Star Wars, Aladdin, Buster Busts Loose £15 each. Tel 01232 815686.

● For sale at £30: FIFA 94, Aladdin, Kick Off 3, Flintstones, Kikikaikai, Pop 'n' Twinbee. For sale at £15: Out To Lunch, WL Basketball, Smash TV and Cybernator. Call Jan-Fei on 01734 612930 or 0421 001464.

● Final Fantasy III (US) £40-45, World Cup Striker (UK) £25, DKC (UK) £25-30, LOTMN (UK) £20, Bart's Nightmare (US no instructions) £15. Ask for Jay on 01707 326205.

● SNES games for sale: Lion King £20, Joe and Mac, Super Star Wars, Mech Warrior £15. SNES joypad with auto fire £10. Tel 01968 678779.

● SNES games for sale. Fifa Soccer (UK) £10, Super Mario All Stars (UK) £10, Rock 'n' Roll Racing (UK) £8, Street Fighter II (US) £5. Tel 01342 715618.

● Super NES games for sale. Secret of Mana £12. Many others. Tel 01923 676740.

● FFIII plus free US game £40 incl p&p. Call Les 01245 472572 (eves) Essex.

● Super Game Boy plus Mystic Quest and Zelda IV £27.50 inc p&p. Call Les 01234 472572 (eves) Essex.

● Pro Action Replay £20 ono. Mario All Stars £25 ono. 2 joypads £5 each. Loads of mags. Phone after 5pm.

● SNES games – Donkey Kong Country, MKII, SSFII, ISS, NBA Jam – £20 each. Metroid, Mario All Stars, Royal Rumble, Sensi Soccer, Street Racer, Action Replay – £15 each. Many others from £10. Tel 01795 471009.

● Conversions – SNES conversions 50/60Hz switch, the only option to play FFIII/Front Mission etc on a UK SNES £12 p&p inclusive. Special Service Offered by Role call, the RPG fanzine. Call for details 01925 490910.

WANTED

● Wanted: any comics, stills, Anime models or soft toys. Tel 0181 445 1272 (5.20pm) good prices paid. From Catgirl Nuku-Nuku or Kiki's Delivery Service.

● Has anyone got MK2? I would like it. I will swap it for Manga videos. I've got Gulgo 13, Vrotskidoji 1 and 2 and Vampire Hunter D. Tel 01343 546609.

● Wanted: Ren and Stimpy for the SNES. I will swap my Battletoads in Battlemaniacs, or buy it for a fairly cheap price. If interested phone Ian on 0181 890 1632. Super Bomberman also wanted – Make me an offer.

● Anyone out there with English translated instruction manual of Final Fantasy III? Will pay £3.50. Please call asap. Ask for Joe on 0181 898 9679.

● Wanted UK MK2. Will pay up to £25, will collect if local. (Liverpool area) Tel 0151 525 3250.

● Wanted desperately: Championship Pool. Will pay £15-20 or swap. Call 01278 782161 and ask for Darren.

● Wanted: lots of really cheap games. Really want Secret of Mana, Unirally and a multi-tap. Offers wanted. Wiltshire area. Tel 01225 863684.

● Wanted: Manga vids, Legend of the Overfiend and Legend of the Demon Womb also fist of the North Star. Contact Shaun on 0181 965 4645 after 6pm Mon-Fri.

● Breath of Fire, Mana, Mystic Quest and other RPGs. I also want a convertor to play NES games on my SNES. Call after 5pm Tel 01203 302043.

● Wanted: Final Fantasy Legend and Final Fantasy Legend II on the Gameboy. Phone Rob on 01202 694120.

BOOK YOUR FREE AD HERE!

Fill in this form (in capital letters, please, bearing in mind that we won't print your name or address – just your phone number, unless you write it in specifically), **stick it on the back of a postcard or envelope or it will go in the bin** (well, would you like to open 200+ envelopes?), and send it to **Supermarket, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.** If you're under 18, please ask your parent or guardian to sign the coupon. This service is only available to private advertisers.

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EXCITABLE VIEWPOINT PLAYBACK

To be honest, we've long since forgotten why the letters pages of *Super Play* are called Playback. Hey, it must have seemed like a good idea at the time.

right now. Honestly, what is it with Internet-connected readers? Honestly, you would not *believe* some of the e-mail we receive.

'A VEIL OF SECRECY'

It's obvious that while everyone was sleeping, Nintendo HAVE been fighting the good fight and wrestling with their own technology under a veil of secrecy. Well done Nintendo! But why have we all waited for the N64? Over the last four or five years Nintendo have consistently surprised. They've reinvented the SNES every year with astounding games and redefined the limits of genres. They are commited to the long term future of each machine they produce... I fully expect the N64 and SNES to co-exist for at least the next couple of years, both being capable of playing different types of games. But most other companies seem a little lost. Sure, Sony's PlayStation looks great now – although, *Tekken* and *WipeOut* aside, many of the actual games either aren't very good or much improvement over 16-bit titles – but I reckon that in 18 months time it'll all look a bit thin in Camp Sony.

It's the age-old tale all over again, that gameplay must survive over graphics and, more importantly, fashions and fads in gaming. Games are what Nintendo are best at, and that's why the N64 will sell.

Thanks for listening. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you!!

Mark Storey, Norwood, Sheffield

Yup, of all the companies that produce both hardware and software, Nintendo continue to produce the best games. Sega have done particularly well for themselves of late with home versions of *VF2*, *Virtua Cop* and *Sega Rally*, but what's round the corner for Saturn owners? Only a small number of interesting games, as any honest Sega fan will attest.

PlayStation and Saturn owners have bought their machines mainly because they were the most powerful pieces of gaming kit available. When Nintendo's machine goes on sale there's going to be a lot of deserted next gen hardware doing the rounds...

'ROTTING GOOSE'

The future of Nintendo games lies in your hands. Will you be smart enough to nurture it like a fleeting minstrel or will you smash it up? I know *Super Play* very well. I haven't ever missed an issue, so I know that your sticks of rotting goose carcass will help you when the time comes to make an important decision. Let the fabled desktops of Sweden guide you and forever be thy name.

David Thomson, via the Internet

If this means, "Are we going to support the Ultra 64?", then you have the answer in your hands

THE SUPER PLAY INTERESTING-O-METER

Ultra 64 updates of old games

All things analogue

TBF's Breakfast Burger Deluxe

HOT

NOT

Broken central heating

Snow

Ice

ENVELOPE ART

Send your crayon scribblings to: Envelope Art, *Super Play*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Now!

WINNER

Vincent Chan of Whetstone, London is a bit of a regular to these pages, but it's little surprise when he's producing such topmost artwork as this 'ere Akuma/Bison arrangement. And check out his *Super Play* lettering. Brillo.

KINDLY LEAVE THE STAGE

Q What do you call a man hiding inside a brown envelope?
A Bill.
Paul Malcolm, Perth
3/10

Q How do you confuse a Saturn owner?
A Stick him in an igloo and tell him to go and sit in the corner.
Marcus Taylor, Wrexham
2/10

Q How did Darth Vader know what Luke Skywalker was getting for Christmas?
A He'd felt his presence.
Jenny Weeks, Plymouth
7/10

Huzzah and hurrah! After 40 issues we finally have a T-shirt winner! Erm, except we don't have any T-shirts left. Have this 'ere copy of *Ahh!!! Real Monsters* instead. And keep the gags coming...

Get 5/10 or above for your joke and win something spesh! Kindly Leave The Stage, Super Play, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

'PONG AT LUNCHTIMES'

This is the first time I've written to a magazine, although I have been playing video games for around 20 years (*Blimey! – Ed*) (*A man of my own cloth, obviously – GF*). When I started playing I was at school and it involved a trip to the local swimming baths to play *Super Pong* at lunchtimes. Now it involves me married with two kids and a SNES in the front room (and a PlayStation and a PC, but I suspect you're not particularly interested in those).

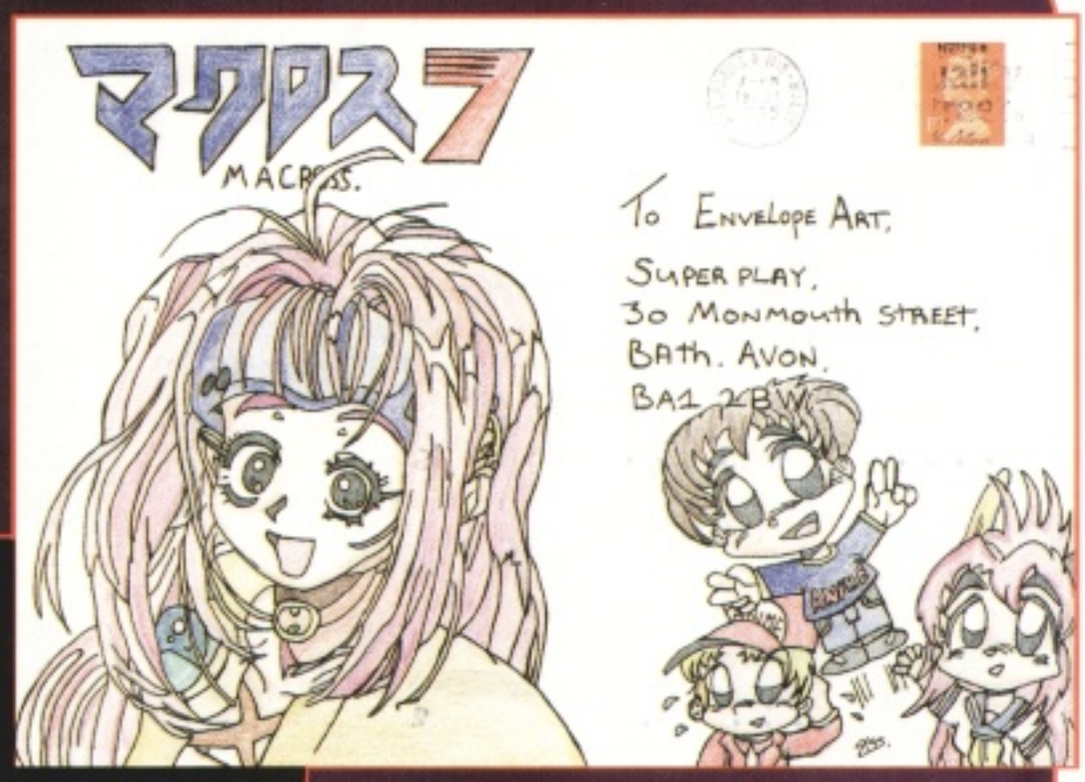
Anyway, I've been around a bit is what I'm saying and my point is that I've never seen anything like the publicity given to a new machine as has been doled out to the Ultra 64. Up until recently no-one had even seen any screenshots of what the machine could do and yet every month you'd read a ten page feature somewhere filled with really useful information like on what date Nintendo issued the press release detailing the fact that, yes, they had signed a deal with so-and-so to do a 3D version of such-and-such a sports game, or whatever. How and why has this happened? Now what's happened is that Nintendo have delivered a console which has disappointed everyone, with only two games that are playable and only half-complete at most.

I'll probably buy an Ultra 64 when it comes out, but I think this time Nintendo may have pushed their luck a bit too far.
Martin Henderson, Lincolnshire

Serious Gamer Alert!

Sorry. Games are a

We rarely print monochrome envelope artwork, but we couldn't resist this pic of Chrono which came from Ross Moffat of Brinsworth, Rotherham.



There's probably a specific term available to describe the style of artwork favoured by Simon Yip of Shrewsbury in this *Macross 7* envelope, but we're jiggered if we know what it is. What we can say with certainty is that it ain't at all bad. And what a funky little T-shirt.

Bold. Bright. Striking. Three words perfectly suited to describing James Gough of Southampton's rendition of the Guyver. He's slapped around a bit of paint to achieve the image and the result is better than most pencil work.

Another excellent Guyver pic, this time rendered portrait style. Ric Somers of Keighley, West Yorkshire is the artist responsible. Good stuff.

serious business, because Joe Public, in close association with companies like Nintendo, Sega, Sony and Namco, has made it that way. Because of this, every move Nintendo makes is big news and gets reported upon respectively. Hence the never-before-seen levels of pre-launch hype and coverage.

But launch disappointment? Sure, there were those (mostly die-hard Sega fans and 'next generation' software developers currently excluded from Nintendo's developmental inner sanctum) who expended a lot of energy rubbishing Nintendo's labours, but those sat in the middle did little but smile knowingly (and wrestle with the other attendees for a go on *Super Mario 64*, of course).

One downer, of course, is that you can never get enough Nintendo software, and by April '96 there may not be the capacity in place to provide it and continue to provide it.

Potential Ultra 64 owners should simply ask themself if they'd rather be tapping into Nintendo's traditional 80:20 hit ratio or the, say, 50:50 of others. (Oh, and also pray to the deity of their choosing that Ninty can convincingly transfer their 2D magic into the third dimension – a task that represents a collosal mountain to climb.)

Secret Of Evermore and I thought... *Mana*. I read the title and it wasn't. I just couldn't believe Square Soft decided to take time over *Evermore* rather than translating *SOM2*. Everything from *SOE* is ripped off from *SOM*, from the title screen, energy bars and menu system right up to the flying map bit! We want *SOM2*!

Chi Tou Yip, Croydon.

More Enix games come to the West seemingly because their content is often more immediately accessible than those of Square.

But without UK offices of the own, companies like Square and Enix depend on the likes of Nintendo (who've published *Evermore* and *Gaia* over here) to make them available in this country: blame them instead, perhaps.

It wasn't simply a case of using the development energy that went into *Evermore* to produce a Western version of *SOM2*, but that doesn't make the situation any less frustrating. UK RPG-ing goes with hardship, apparently.

Meanwhile it's interesting to note that there are currently no plans to release *Evermore* in Japan...

'SHOPPING'

I was interested to see that Nintendo have signed a deal with Netscape to produce on-line gaming services and suchlike. I'm not interested in home shopping but I'd like to know how it's all going to affect the games themselves.

Simon Stone, Warwickshire

It's not yet clear. All we know is that Nintendo are taking over the world and nothing can stop them! Not even Godzilla!

'THE FLYING MAP'

After reading *SP39*, I felt that I had to write this. Firstly I'd like to give credit to Enix for constantly trying to release RPGs in the West. With *Illusion Of Time* and *Genesis* looking especially good, they are going higher and higher in my good books. Square Soft, however, are going down. I took one glance at the pictures from the review of

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HIGHLIGHTS

'I am writing (*Oh dear – Ed*) to ask why you always give Rare such a hard time.'

Colin Cookson, Stoke-On-Trent

Er, we don't. Do we? The truth lies on pages 30 to 35.

'Why don't you divide the magazine into two portions – *Super Play* and *64 Play*?'

The Jester, via the Internet

We just like to keep you on your toes, that's all.

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FINAL FANTASY FORUM

This is the place where Squareheads meet, discuss their triumphs and losses, and – "Disgusting! You sound like chapters from a self-help booklet!"

Our Wil's refused to reveal the game's hidden character in his reviews of *Chrono Trigger*, but judging by your questions regarding those Sickles for sale I guess it's time to reveal all.

The year's 12,000 BC. After the disastrous encounter with Lavos in the Kingdom of Zeal, your party (minus Chrono) regains consciousness in the Last Village. When you're ready, venture forth to the North Cape on this island. At the top of the cliff you'll find Magus, who twitches his gloves in readiness for another showdown. You're given a choice to battle him: say "No" and he'll admit he has no interest in fighting. From here on, Magus will use his dark magic to assist you in your quest to defeat Lavos. This seventh character is now a permanent addition to your party.

You can't get better gear.

Single Techs:
Lightning 2
Ice 2
Fire 2
Dark Bomb
Magic Wall
Dark Mist
Black Hole

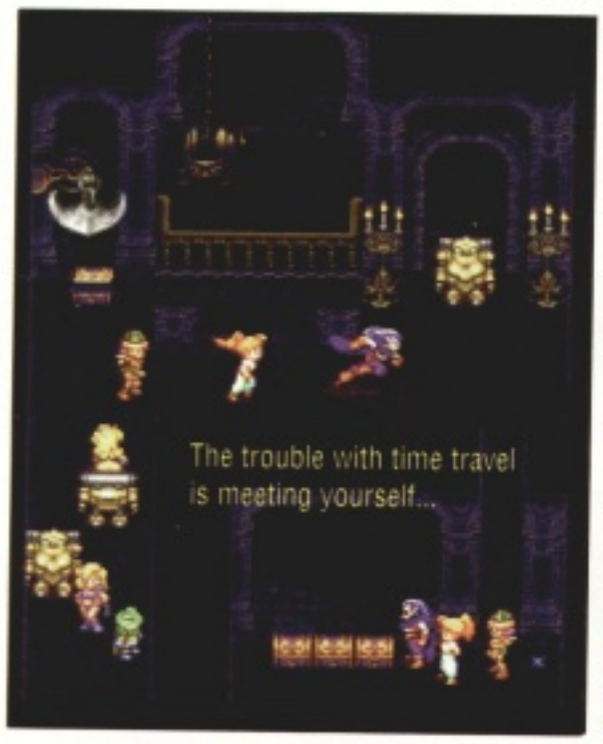
Dark Matter

Triple Tech:
Dark Eternal (requires Black Rock)
Omega Flare (requires Blue Rock)

Doom and Gloom

To find the best armour and weaponry for Magus, set the controls of the Epoch for 600 AD and look for Ozzie's Fort. If you've already solved this section of the game, the Fort will be empty: if not, then it's worth putting Magus at the head of your party for some more interesting character interaction between the Dark One and Ozzie.

In the second grand hall of the Fort, there's a secret treasure chamber that will only be revealed if you enter the passage on the right (see diagram). In this chamber you'll see three chests and, if you pay attention, a Magic Tab to the right of the door. The chests contain:



1 Gloom Cape (Defence 84);
1 Gloom Helm (Defence 42, protects status); and...
1 DoomSickle (attack 160, strength increases if an ally in the party falls in battle).

Many of the game's endings seem incomplete with respect to Magus, so can he ever find his sister after the destruction of Zeal? Having completed the game several times we think Schala is another of Square's unpursued plot threads, but the *Super Play* Challenge remains open for anyone to prove us wrong.

PROFILES

MOOGLE

Are those vestigial wings? The small cute furry thing is first found at the mercy of the thief called Lone Wolf high above Narshe. If you want Mog to join you in the world of Balance, choose to save him rather than the treasure (a Gold Hairpin relic) that Lone Wolf carries.

Pay special attention to battle backgrounds. Mog's Dance skill has a 100% success rate if you use it in the terrain in which the dance was learnt (forest, snow, water etc). You risk a chance of stumbling with all other dances, but the attacks of the native dance may not be effective against monsters from that particular area.

Mog's best armour is the Snow Muffler, easily obtained by wagering a Behemoth Suit at the Colosseum. His best weapon is the Aura Lance, found in a chest while on the Ancient Castle escapade (or by betting Strato).

Many of you are still looking for the Moogle Charm with little hope of success, so here's the secret. The only time you can collect it is when you first discover Mog in the World of Ruin. Take just three people into the mines of Narshe

Great Moments Of Rock

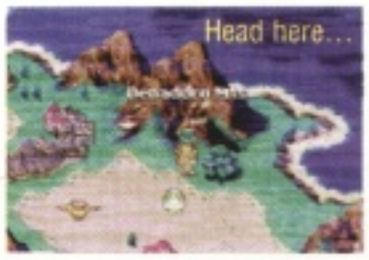
Chrono Trigger's battle system improves dramatically when the characters begin to learn combined fighting techniques. The most complex of these are learnt at certain experience levels, but there are five powerful Triple Techs which can only be performed if one of the members of your party has a special Rock equipped as an accessory. Here is the definitive list of Triple Tech Rocks, with instructions for discovering them.

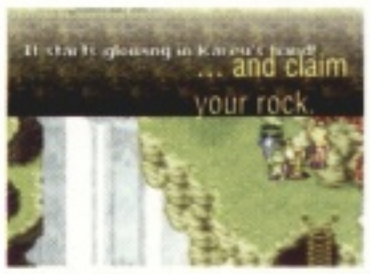
● Blue Rock. This is the easiest Rock to find, as it sits in a treasure chest within the Cave Giant's Claw. It teaches the Triple Tech 'Omega Flare' and is used by Lucca, Robo and Magus.

● White Rock. This is also found in a treasure chest, and you should come across it fairly easily when you tackle the Black Omen in any time zone (although you should note that you can only find it once). It teaches the Triple Tech 'Poyozo Dance', used by Marle, Lucca and and Ayla.

● Black Rock. A number of secret doors exist in the kingdom of Zeal. One of the Nu will tell you a riddle of Wind, Water and Fire, and if you try opening many of the books here you'll see corresponding elemental magical effects springing forth from their pages. Open the books in the order told by the Nu and a secret door will open. The Black Rock is found in Kajar, the second city of Zeal: it teaches the Triple Tech 'Dark Eternal', and is used by Marle, Lucca and Magus.

● Silver Rock. Return to 65,000,000 BC in the latter stages of the game and explore the Laruba Ruins after the inhabitants have moved to Ayla's village. You'll encounter a lonely Nu who offers a renaming facility for the first person in your party. The first time you accept this offer you'll also be presented with the Silver Rock. It teaches the Triple Tech 'Spin Strike', used by used by Frog, Robo and Ayla.





● Gold Rock. The precise conditions for discovering this rock make it the most elusive. Set up your party so that Frog leads and return to the Denadoro Mountains in 600 AD. Make your way through until you reach the point where the FreeLancer throws stones at you across a ravine. If you stand in the correct place, Frog will catch one of the stones and it will start to glow in his hand. This is the Gold Rock, and it teaches the Triple Tech 'Grand Dream' used by Marle, Frog and Robo.

We're been picking up rumours concerning the existence of a sixth Red Rock, but we're inclined to disbelieve them. We suspect that many players have misinterpreted the comments made by people in Ayla's village that actually refer to more important items in the game and got a bit carried away.

Mwa Ha Ha Ha Ha!

Prog rock anthems ahoy! It's delightful to have the space for another piece of reader art this month, and we've agreed on this rendition of Kefka's final manifestation as Magitek-manufactured man-god by Matt Lyon of Hants. Instead of attempting an anime portrait, he's has gone with the European style that Amano used in his *FF* designs.

Kefka. A classic git.

Last Words

Finally, proof that Siegfried can't be Locke: it's possible for Locke to meet Siegfried, and even fight him... Also, Jez Hewitt of Lowestoft points out that the rocks on Mt Kolts are too numerous to be THE Square trademark face... Too many people to thank this month – I'll try to get more credits in next time. Special mentions go to Tatsushi Nakao, Shining Forth, Rolecall, Journey's End and 'Soulcat' (who boasts the worst net sig ever).

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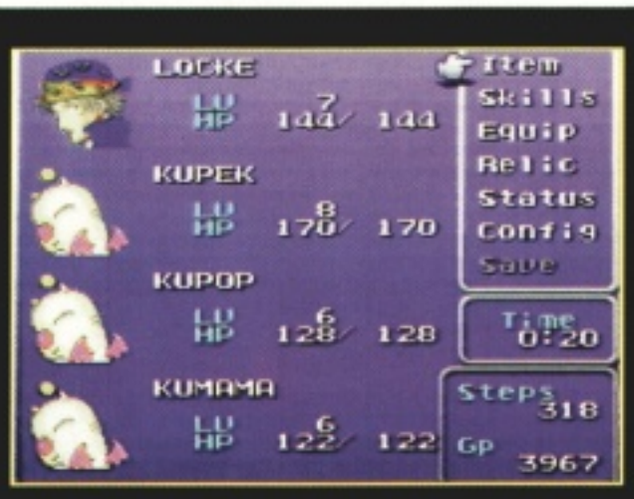


Locke's Moogle fighters: this is how they look in the World of Balance, protecting Terra...

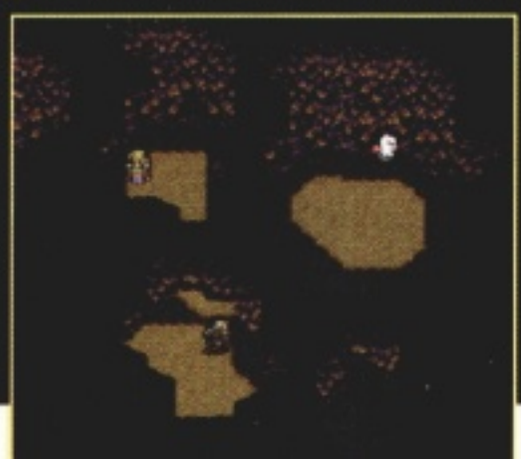
... and here they are in the World of Ruin, looking much tougher and boasting Dance skills like Mog.

And here they are again. Allegedly. If you know how we found them, write in and look smart.

so there's space for him to join you straight away. You'll find him in the Moogles' Cave, waiting despairingly on his own, and standing against the wall. When Mog agrees to help the cause again, note the spot where he is standing. Search the wall at that spot by pressing A and you'll come across the Moogle Charm.

Only Mog can equip this relic, which completely prevents random monster encounters. It's excellent for escaping from tough dungeons, or re-exploring those you've already completed (like the cave to Ancient Castle). But if you rely on it too heavily, you won't learn new spells or build levels.

We've also got a little conundrum for those who think they know *FFIII*. Can you tell us how Locke can recruit the party of Moogles who first helped him protect Terra in the mines of Narshe? This screenshot from the World of Ruin is genuine, and features no camera or computer trickery...



If you squint, you can just see Mog standing on the Charm.

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IRRESPONSIBLE pictures

"My favourite is Sailor Mercury," said the rotund, bearded American fellow who obviously hadn't washed his Ranma T-shirt in weeks. We sniggered and left to review some vids.

KABUTO
Manga Video — 15

45 minutes (dubbed) **RRP:** £9.99

It would seem that Manga have done some sort of little deal with Buichi Terasawa. We've already seen his flares-and-lasers version of *Our Man Flint* in *Space Adventure Cobra* and now we're getting his version of the man with no name – Raven Tengu Kabuto.

Returning to his childhood village, the mean and moody Kabuto finds things not as they should be. An evil queen, with an army of demons and bizarre retro machines, have taken over and enslaved the townsfolk, forcing them to mine gold for her. Kabuto, of course, isn't having any of it, and it isn't long before he's causing the queen all sorts of hassle and relieving her minions of their limbs left, right and centre.

The trouble is, that's it for the rest of the film. Kabuto goes from confrontation to confrontation, working his way nearer to the queen. The action may be interspersed with a few flashbacks and a bit of love interest with a fleeing princess, but they're just there to give Kabuto a few minutes of breathing space before he doffs another villian, frankly. Never once do you think he's in danger, something that robs the film of any tension it might have built.

What rescues *Kabuto* is its design and animation. Terasawa's Westernised character designs have been superbly rendered and the fights are excellently staged. There are some great Edo-period machines and monsters (and one very *silly* one) and the whole thing reeks of quality production values.

I guess that every fan should have at least one of these 'lone warrior against an army' stories and if you haven't yet, *Kabuto* is a decent enough applicant for the job.

Wil Overton

6 out of 10

LADIUS
Western Connection — 15

48 minutes (subtitled) **RRP:** £8.99

Some years ago, when I was just getting into all this Japanese animation malarky, I scooped up a video called *World Of The Talisman* from the bargain bin at Boots. Although I later learned that this £2.99 buy was a typical Western cut-up version of an OAV (originally called *Birth* in this case), at the time it was a revelation, with great stylised artwork and fast-paced action all wrapped up in a neat other-world fantasy setting.

In many ways *Ladius* took me right back to my happy times with *Talisman*. There's no real plot to speak of, just some rubbish about spiky-haired hero Riot and his identical girly twin partners getting the Eye of Zalem so that they can bust into some ruins and nab stacks of tip-top treasure. Of course, there's a whole load of nasty baddies who would like nothing better than to get their hands on the booty as well, and the proceedings quickly degenerate into 50 minutes of fighting and giant robots. Not even Western Connection's usual shaky subtitling can get in way of the action.

Granted, all the artwork may look a little dated for those used to the latest in cutting-edge anime but there's some cracking design work in here, especially in the giant mobile suit battle. There's certainly no other place in the world where they can design robots with the same flair as the Japanese.

There's no way this was ever going to be a classic but as a one-off piece of lighthearted fun it works very well. Don't worry about the subtitles, you won't have to do much reading anyway (sorry, Jonathan) – just sit back, switch off, and enjoy.

Wil Overton

7 out of 10

BOUNTY DOG
Manga Video — 15

60 minutes (dubbed) **RRP:** £11.99

To be honest, I wasn't expecting an awful lot from this two-part OAV dating from 1994. Despite not really being long enough to do justice to its storyline, however, there's a lot to enjoy in *Bounty Dog*.

This time around it's the Moon that's been colonised by Earth, and in a *Total Recall*-type situation most of the real estate is owned by a huge corporation. Enter the Bounty Dog Unit, sent from Earth to investigate strange energy sources which they believe are connected with the company. So far so good, with *Bounty Dog* shaping up to be typical Manga fare. When one of the team starts seeing a young girl who reminds him of his dead love, however, things turn from hi-tech thriller to something a little more strange. An alien power known as the Sleeper is awakening, and its dark side plans to wipe the Moon and Earth clean of mankind!

Visually, as well as some superb character designs from Hirotoshi Sano, *Bounty Dog*'s use of colour – or rather lack of it – is inspired. Typically, each scene is rendered as if there's just one specific light colour illuminating it, and it suits the whole mood and feel perfectly.

Although I've championed the cause of the single film over series recently, I felt that *Bounty Dog*'s story really did deserve at least another two episodes to properly resolve events. At one point the whole Moon starts to get evacuated, but blink and you'll miss it! Likewise, the team's journey to their invetible confrontation with the Sleeper wasn't half the epic trek it could (and should) have been.

But top marks to Manga for a decent dub that doesn't have profanities every second word.

Wil Overton

7 out of 10

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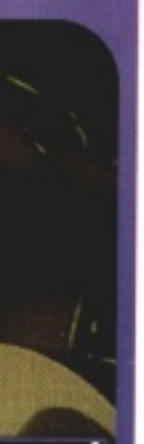

7
out of 10

IP NEWSLINE

Happy New Year

Manga Video's line-up for 1996 looks set to keep fans of series old and new happy with continuations of favourites such as *3X3 Eyes* along with new entries like retro release *Giant Robo* and the stylish *Vampire Princess Miyu*. Best news of all, though, is that as well as the blockbusting *Ghost In The Shell* being available to buy from April, the classic Miyazaki Lupin film *Castle Of Cagliostro* will be out in June. Here's the full rundown, but be prepared for some slight alterations (like *La Blue Girl* not getting through the censors).

February — Mad Bull #1
Time Etranger
Giant Robo #1
Goku – Midnight Eye #1
March — La Blue Girl #1&2
Mad Bull #2
Giant Robo #2
Vampire Princess Miyu #1
April — La Blue Girl #3&4
Vampire Princess Miyu #2
Ghost In The Shell
Giant Robo #3
Mad Bull #3
May — La Blue Girl #5&6
Giant Robo #4
Goku – Midnight Eye #2
Mad Bull #4
3X3 Eyes #3
June — Giant Robo #5
Castle Of Cagliostro
3X3 Eyes #4

ARMITAGE III
Pioneer Anime
15
50 minutes (dubbed) RRP: £6.99

Despite nailing their colours firmly to the 'family entertainment' side of anime recently, with *Armitage III*, more than any of their other releases, Pioneer are taking on Manga at their own game.

It's 2179 and although the setting is Mars, the scene could be any heavily populated sci-fi city. Chicago cop Ross Silibus finds his transfer to the Martian Police Department starting a little earlier than he expected as country-singing sensation Kelly McCanon is murdered at the spaceport when he arrives. He also gets to meet his new partner – Armitage, a 19-year-old with a quick answer and a hatred for police uniforms. When it later tranpires that McCanon was a sophiscated Type-III robot, a rebellion against machines breaks out on Mars, and Ross and Armitage are put on the trail of the robot assassin. You're probably thinking *Blade Runner* during all of this, although I doubt that any story which concerns itself with robots that look exactly like humans will be able to get away without any references to Ridley Scott's flick. And I doubt I'm giving anything away by saying that Armitage's involvement in the robot revolt is more than just professional.

Sadly, though, *Armitage III* has to be Pioneer's weakest release yet. While the animation is reasonable and the dubbing generally fine (although the character designs take a little getting used to), the story lacks both strength and originality. Anyone who hasn't guessed the ending after 15 minutes just isn't thinking hard enough.

Hopefully, with three other episodes to collect, things will flesh out a little.

Wil Overton

5
out of 10

LOVE CITY
Western Connection
12
105 minutes (subtitled) RRP: £13.99

What should you expect from a video called *Love City*? Well, from the picture on the sleeve, something a tad on the saucy side and definitely at odds with its 'suitable for youngsters' 12 certificate.

What you actually get is over an hour-and-a-half of bizarre psychic action, giant floating heads, alcoholic detectives and a cat with snappy dress sense. Trouble is, although there's a huge amount of inventiveness and flair going on in *Love City*, as a whole it comes over as a bit of a mess. There are at least two points where it seems to be building up to a climactic ending only to suddenly lurch on for another 20 minutes. There are also flashback sequences (where it's revealed how hero Kei came to team up with a near-naked psychic assassin and a child clone of an old lover while on the run from some distinctly weird blue baddies) confusingly interspersed with the action. Combine this with subtitles that have the spelling of characters' names changing all over the place and *Love City* can become a bit of a task to keep track of.

Amazingly enough, even though it was made some three years earlier, *Love City* has quite a bit in common with the almighty *Akira*. The whole story is nothing if not a warning about messing with DNA and Mother Nature, and there's even a manic bike chase at the beginning. Even though I sat through it quite hapilly, however, *Akira* it is not. There's an amazing amount of animation going on, but the artwork style is looking slightly dated now, and coupled with the fact that it's subtitled, it's sure to put many off.

It's interesting and fun but not for the casual viewer who has trouble following *The Guyver*.

Wil Overton

4
out of 10

Buy Stuff Here!

Having trouble finding that latest issue of *Newtype* or that vinyl doll of Ancie Farm from *Sonic Soldier Borgman*? Then you could do worse than to try out the UK's latest dedicated anime and manga retailer – Otaku Publishing Ltd. They've got a decent range of Japanese-related merchandise for sale, from CDs and books to laserdiscs and even mouse mats, and they plan to have a catalogue available sometime in January. If you're interested you can contact them at: Otaku Publishing Ltd. P.O. Box 9573, London SE23 3FZ, but if you have access to the Net you should try out their rather stylish WWW site at: www.otaku.com/

Hey! Who gave these guys access to a 3D design and rendering package?

VIDEO DIARY

JANUARY 1996

Still got some of that cash that granny gave you at Xmas? Well, there may not be a huge selection on offer but, hey, this isn't Japan, y'know.

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BOUNTY DOG
PROJECT A-KO 6 – Battle 2: Blue Side

ANIME PROJECTS
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PIONEER LDCE
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Massive review inside

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CES news; *Lufia*, *Super Puyo Puyo* and *Soccer Kid* reviewed; and a *Turtles: Tournament Fighters* player's guide.

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Fatal Fury 2 reviewed; a guide to *Mystical Ninja 2*; we visit Nintendo of Japan; plus a free manga book.

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Super Metroid reviewed; a football special; a *Mega Man X* guide; and a feature on getting hold of cheap carts.

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Vortex previewed; *Super Bomberman 2* and *Dragon* reviewed; and a Super Player's Guide to *Clay Fighter*.

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Wild Trax reviewed; a feature telling you how to draw anime; exclusive *Syndicate* feature; plus *NBA Jam* guide!

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Super Street Fighter II reviewed; exclusive Squaresoft interview; the most exhaustive *Super Metroid* guide.

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Mortal Kombat and *Breath Of Fire* reviewed; plus the most comprehensive *Super Street Fighter II* player's guide.

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Sparkster and *Secret Of Mana* reviewed; complete *Mortal Kombat II* player's guide; plus loads, loads more stuff...

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Final Fantasy III, *Illusion Of Gaia* and *Syndicate* reviewed; *MKII* player's guide; and much more!

ISSUE 27
Donkey Kong Country, *Ultimate Parodius* and *Demon's Blazon* reviewed; *Rock 'n' Roll Racing* tipped.

ISSUE 28
Samurai Spirits, *Cannon Fodder* and *Clayfighter 2*; plus part one of our *DKC* player's guide.

ISSUE 29
X-Men Special; *Pinball Fantasies*, *Ardy Lightfoot*; and the concluding part of our *DKC* guide.

ISSUE 30
Huge *Mega Man* feature, *Killer Instinct* guide; plus loads of reviews including *International Superstar Soccer*...

ISSUE 31
Free anime postcards; reviews of *Front Mission*, *Super Turrican 2*, *Addams Family Values* and *Dirt Racer SFX*.

ISSUE 32
In-depth *Chrono Trigger* feature, a look at the DIY shoot-'em-up kit *Dezaemon*, and the Shigeru Miyamoto interview.

ISSUE 33
News on the biggest games of '95. *Killer Instinct*, *DKC 2*, *Doom*, *MK3* and a feature on *Secret of Mana 2*.

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Exclusive news of *Yoshi's Island*, exclusive *Doom* feature plus *Theme Park* and *Jungle Strike* playguides.

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Reviews of *Super Bomberman 3*, *Mortal Kombat 3* and *Chrono Trigger*, plus a feature on the craze of retro gaming.

Missed a hot feature? Maybe an amazing player's guide? Or an in-depth review? Catch up here...

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NEXT MONTH IN SUPER PLAY

March issue on sale Thursday February 1st.

SUPER PLAY

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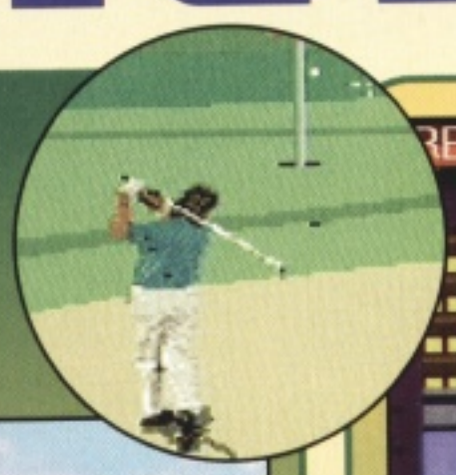
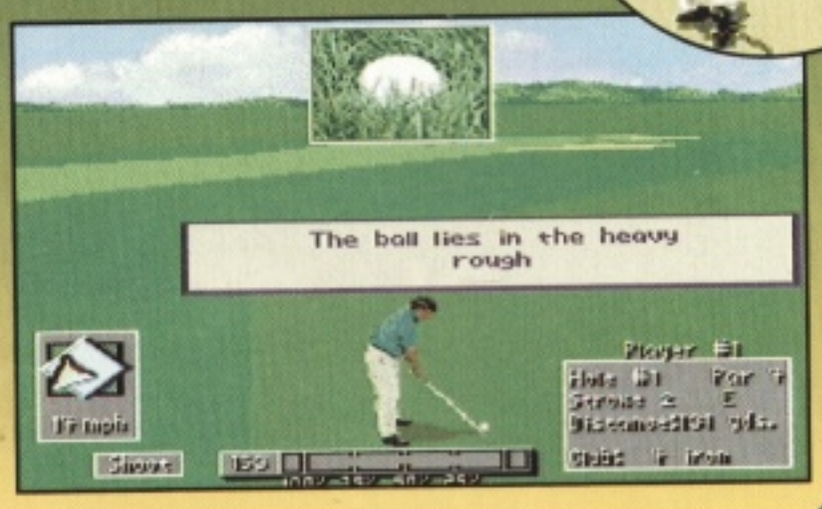
PGA GOLF

Have you heard of Ninty's SA-1 DSP chip? If so you'll want to see how well T•HQ put it to work in this idyllic afternoon sim.





REVOLUTION X

Arriving too late for the full review treatment this month, Acclaim's rock music-infested blaster is just going to have to wait until next time...

CUTTHROAT ISLAND

Get Geena Davis in your bedroom – or at least a pixellated representation of her – in Acclaim's *Cut-Throat Island*. Will this Acclaim film license buckle our swashes? Or not?

PLUS!

The music feature we promised you last month (yes, sorry, something had to give way for our extensive Ultra 64 coverage), reviews of *Breath Of Fire 2*, *Mega Man X3*, and more exclusive Ultra 64 news, game reports and interviews. We just don't know how we do it...

FEBRUARY 1996 ISSUE 40

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